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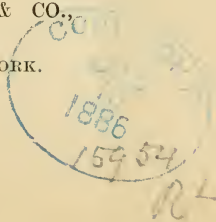


THE  
CREDIBLE CHRONICLES  
OF  
THE PATCHWORK VILLAGE,  
'SCONSET BY THE SEA.

EVELYN T. UNDERHILL & CO.,

NO. 22 SPRUCE STREET, NEW YORK.

1886.



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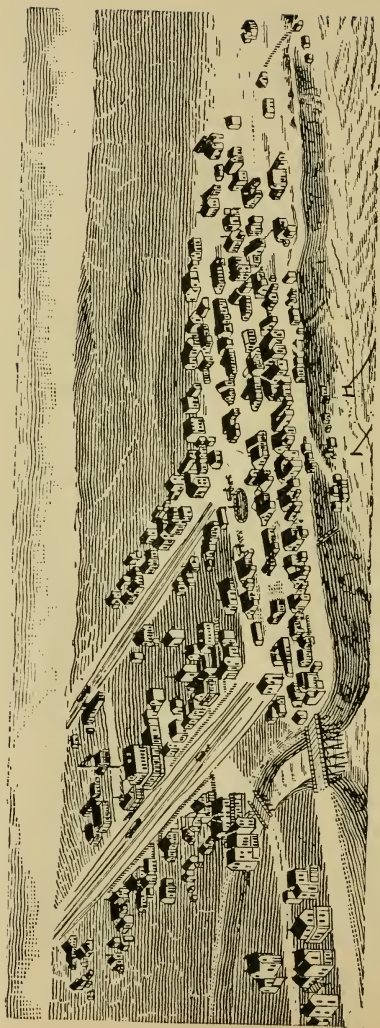
## PREFACE.

To the readers of this book who purchased it unadvisedly and without fault of their own, I owe and I tender an apology. Nothing is due to those who successfully resisted the blandishments of the publishers. They are able to take care of themselves.

It was written at different times and in varying moods. Like a 'Sconset cottage it was made in sections, without unity of design, and certainly with no thought of inflicting it upon a patient and long-suffering public. Any credible statements contained in it were concocted without malicious premeditation, and I am not conscious of even a mischievous intent rankling within my bosom. Whatever is absolutely false was introduced under the belief that draped fiction would be perused by modest readers in preference to the naked truth. But it did dawn upon my understanding that, if its parts were securely lashed together, the total result would sell and that I would thereby greatly profit. I don't believe that anybody's mental, moral, physical, or financial constitution will suffer an irrecoverable strain by its publication; unless it be the publishers'. But they take their chances. If the event shall prove that I am mistaken in this view, I give due notice that any attempt to recover damages, either actual or exemplary, will be resisted by every device known to the law.

New York, September, 1884.

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## A PATCHWORK VILLAGE.

One hundred and twenty miles nearly south-east of Boston and directly south of the peninsula of Cape Cod is the Island of Nantucket, famous for its connection with the whale fishery, and for near a century as the nursery of American seamen. On its south-east corner is a little village, like unto which there is no other. Its aboriginal name was Siasconset; but the natives of the island, in ordinary speech, have eliminated its first syllable and call it 'Seonset. It is quaint in appearance. The surf beats on the beach before it. The air and surroundings possess qualities to afford rest to mind and body. Quiet is the rule. Fashion has never gained a foothold within it. Excitement must be sought. To cares, strangers become indifferent. They are free from multifarious troubles that are common to those on the continent. Neither mosquitoes; nor walking matches; nor millionaires; nor tramps; nor earthquakes; nor cholera; nor coaching clubs; nor beggars; nor political crises; nor duns; nor corners in lard; nor stock privileges; nor chills and fever; nor strikes; nor city statesmen; nor gin-mills; nor trichinæ spiralis; nor kid gloves; nor theological polemics; nor fast horses; nor operative dissensions; nor boisterous revivals; nor dynamite conspiracies; nor malaria, disturb the even tenor of human rest and enjoy-

ings that to-day give architectural character to the village. They were put up on the edge of The Bank that they might be near to, and yet be in safety from the sea; for in those days, during heavy storms, the waves dashed over the beach and against the bluff on which the houses stood. In time, a second and a third row were built up in the same manner, each running in a parallel direction with the first, and thus narrow streets but little over twenty feet in width were an incidental result and were not laid out by design.

Now and then the wives, daughters and sisters of the fishermen paid them visits for a day or so at a time. They enjoyed the pure and invigorating air of The Bank and even the primitive life their husbands, fathers and brothers led was not without its charms. With their advent, even for temporary sojourns, additional comforts were necessary. Old window sashes were brought from the village on the other side of the island and fitted into the sides of the houses. Floors were laid. A little shanty of inclined boards was put up at the end under which to hang a kettle or set a frying pan, to do the necessary cooking, and this, in its turn, may have been the beginning of a second room of the dwelling. As families increased and visits became more frequent, other improvements were needed. Two or three little sleeping rooms were built on, at the other end. They projected beyond the line of the main room in front and rear, and the roofs over them were sometimes brought to within four or five feet of the ground. These little bed room additions became known on the island as "warts" and are still so designated by residents. Odds and ends of furniture were brought from elsewhere to make the house habitable for protracted stays. Bedsteads and bedding superseded the bunks on which they had slept. Then a fireplace made of stones, held together with clay, was put up, and from its top a chimney of boards allowed the smoke to escape through the roof. In time, another room was added



Ye Wreck off Tom Neve's, bys He'd.

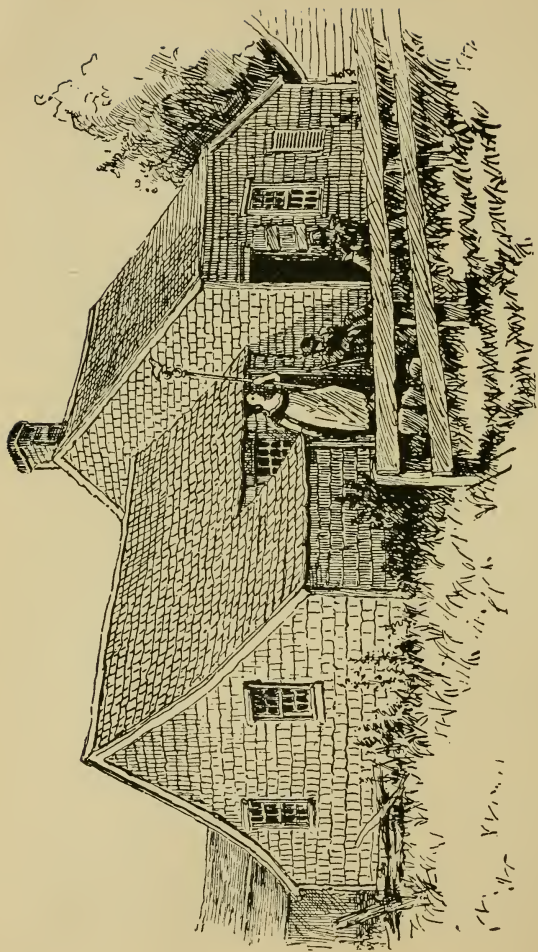
or perhaps two, at one end of the house for use as a "porch," by which term a kitchen is known on Nantucket. A brick chimney then replaced the old one made of boards. Then a shingled roof became a matter of necessity and comfort. Next, joists were run across, under the roof, to support a floor and thus a little cramped attic was made to furnish additional sleeping accommodations during the season of fishing. In time the sides of the houses were shingled. Then, perhaps, a little cellar was dug to preserve their food untainted during the warm weather. Next some extravagant fisherman made the innovation of lathed and plastered walls from which to scowl at his less pretentious neighbors. In a very few instances a cistern to catch water was built, but, in most cases, it is still received and stored in casks standing at the corners of the houses.

What I have here briefly sketched was not the work of one or even two generations, but required near a century to complete. No man saw the beginning and completion of what has been described in respect to any one house. But still more room was needed. The "Proprietors" of the island had either formally or tacitly dedicated The Bank to the use of fishermen, who "squatted" upon the ground they thought they required and each squatter was in close proximity to his neighbor on either side, with but a few feet intervening. When he could no longer enlarge at the end of his house, he must of necessity build on at an angle, from the front, or the rear, or on both, accordingly as space was available. The additions were made out of whatever material was at hand. Or perhaps the builder purchased an old boat house, or small barn, or a little house on another part of the island and took it down and brought it to The Bank in sections. In some cases the beginning of the dwelling was brought from Sesachacha, another "fishing stage" two miles to the northward of Siasconset, or from Madeket, or from "The Town," as Nantucket is called, either

of them several miles distant. The timbers in a given house were used without regard to their thickness, for sills, or studs, or joists. One may have been taken from a wreck stranded upon the beach; others from an old house in The Town; still others from barns that were sold for old material. Old doors were got, here and there, of different sizes and patterns. If too long they were "razeed" to suit the height of the room. One might be made of a single board 18 or 20 inches wide, and another paneled and another battened. Those leading into the open air uniformly swung outward as a precautionary measure against gales; for the owners naturally reasoned that it would be easier to blow a door in, if it hung in the usual manner, than it would be to blow the entire house over if the door closed from without. On many of the doors wooden latches with latch strings are still to be seen, and on a few are the original wooden hinges on which they were hung at the time they were placed in position. Windows of odd shapes and sizes, both in respect of sash and glass, were fitted into the sides of the house, and in at least one house there were a dozen windows with no two alike. In time brick fire-places and chimneys superseded those of stone and wood and the chimneys, sometimes two and a half feet square, project through the roof from a room, perhaps, not more than 10 feet by 12. And when completed the structures had assumed shapes so fantastic as to be like nothing in the heavens, nor on the earth, nor in the waters beneath the earth.

But this was not all. From the wrecks of vessels the carved figure-heads, or strips containing their names, were taken and brought ashore and nailed to the gables of the houses for ornamentation. Or, if the figure was of life size, it was set up in the front yard and from year to year is repainted, in bright colors, as a model for visiting artists not





Opplene Posten, by Hove: called of Saint George's Matha.

to follow in reproducing the human form divine. The most notable example of a life size figure is that to be found in front of the residence of that ancient mariner Captain William Baxter, which has been preserved in thousands of photographs. She is a laneous virgin and though she has been under the inspection of residents and visitors, heaven knows how many years, the most virulent gossip on The Bank has never uttered a word against her chastity.

The streets on which the old houses are situated indicate the incidental origin and growth of the place. They run north and south. In the latter part of the 18th century, a heavy gale made such an inroad upon The Bank that one row of houses was in danger of falling over, and they were removed further back. Again, in a southeast gale, which happened in October, 1835, and which the 'Seonset men will tell interesting stories about, The Bank was so rapidly washed away that one or two houses went down, and a half dozen others would have followed, but that they were removed. So the old streets are now reduced to three. They are intersected by little openings which, at the beginning of the village were spaces from five to ten feet wide, and were used only for the passage of wheel-barrows. In latter years through some of them vehicles pass to the edge of The Bank and down the roadway to the beach. But the houses are not set in a line with the street, nor are the sides of the streets themselves in a direct line. Mathematical accuracy was not thought necessary for the purposes of the projectors, and much less were land surveyors dreamed of to ensure right lines. Some abut directly on what may be supposed to be the street line. Others are a little back with a board or picket fence, sometimes on the border line between utility and ruin. The lots on which they are built may be anywhere from 25 to 40 feet in front with a depth no larger. The ruts made by the wheels of the passing

vehicles are always to be seen in the centers of the streets. Of artificial sidewalks there are none.

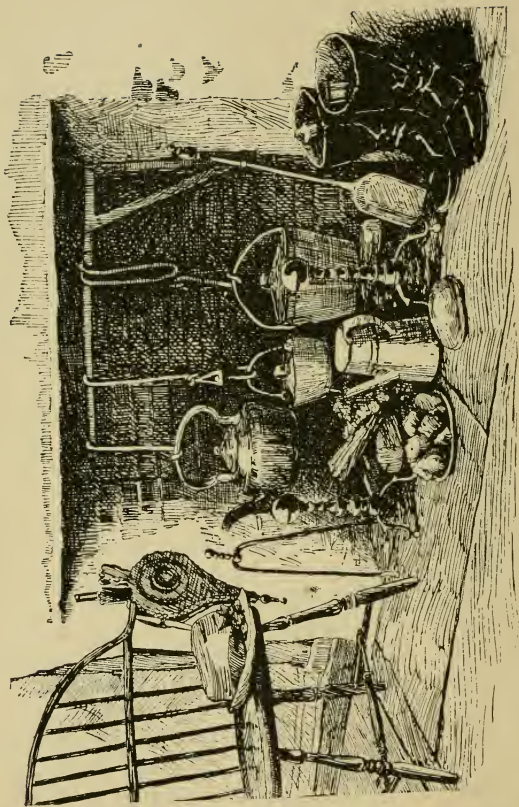
In the center of the village is the old pump which was placed in position in the year of the Declaration of American Independence, when some fifty of the people interested in the place made subscriptions of a shilling and upwards, to dig the well and construct the pump. To day it still exists. It is picturesque in appearance and annually many views are taken by the camera and by artists. At night lighted lanterns are suspended in front of the dwellings by the tenants to facilitate movements through the village in the dark and they also give a lively appearance to the village.

But a glance at the interiors of the little houses is sufficient to suggest that the architects were seafaring men, whose ideas of house building were largely gained from their experience on shipboard. By the settling of the sills and joists, sometimes the floors have assumed the convexity of a ships deck, which might well give rise to the thought that the builder intended it to recall recollections of his life at sea. The snug parlors, perhaps, six or seven feet in height, and in length and breadth not twice as large, remind one of ship cabins. The small bedrooms are little more than state rooms in their proportions, while available spaces are used for closets that are little more than cabin lockers slightly enlarged. To ascend to the attic there is a step ladder fixed at a slight inclination, or it may be a mere succession of rungs fastened perpendicularly against the side of the room by which to climb as best one may. Everything within suggests snugness, comfort and convenience, as the object of the builders. On the walls are ancient pictures, some very crude both in design and execution, suggestive of domestic life or illustrating the dangers of whale fishery, or giving views of foreign lands. On the mantel-piece there may be a couple of brass candlesticks, a



pair of snuffers with an antique vase or two. Oft a rag carpet, such as our grandmothers cut and wove, covers the floor. Chairs of patterns in vogue a hundred years ago; antique tables with spindle legs and carved feet; queer old clocks, some the production of Connecticut skill a half a century since, and others brought from England or Holland by old shipmasters, and which are now owned by their children, grand-children or great-grand-children, perhaps; four post bedsteads on which feather beds and patch-work quilts are laid; bureaus with oval fronts and odd brass handles or glass knobs to move the drawers; mirrors of French plate glass and frames of fantastic scroll work; or others of early American manufacture, with the plate surmounted by a landscape painted on glass, showing impossible trees, impracticable houses and lakes, the solid waters of which exhibit all the hues of a vigorous but eccentric rainbow; cutlery and crockery of odd shapes and patterns and of all ages, ancient and modern, some pieces of which may have been in the families of their owners for, perhaps, three generations, and even pewter plates and platters may be intermixed on the cupboard shelves. Now and then, the iron crane still swings in an ancient fire-place and on it are hung the pots and kettles for cooking the daily meals of the inmates. As no house is furnished with any thought of unity of design, it is apparent that the articles were brought by their owners from their homes in "The Town." Whatever was not needed there was sent to 'Sconset for immediate use, or for storage until it should be wanted.

During the war of the Revolution, Siasconset had a considerable accession in its growth; and again during the war of 1812. The same causes operated alike at both periods. By the middle of the last century the interests of the island had become almost wholly identified with the



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whale fishery; but the advent of the war made the pursuit hazardous. Some of the seamen did suffer capture and imprisonment. Cut off from supplies from the main land, with a soil too poor to afford sustenance from the products of the earth, they were compelled to follow fishing for food, and it was at these periods that some of the houses were constructed on The Bank or were brought thither from other parts of the island. But with the return of peace, the old industry of the island was resumed and was continued until the zenith of its prosperity was reached, about 1840, when, with nearly ten thousand inhabitants on Nantucket, everybody had all the employment he could wish in whatever productive calling he was engaged. At that time there were public houses at 'Sconset and even a billiard room and bowling alleys, to afford recreation to the fishermen or to returned seamen, who sought rest in the village prior to again going on a cruise which might last for years.

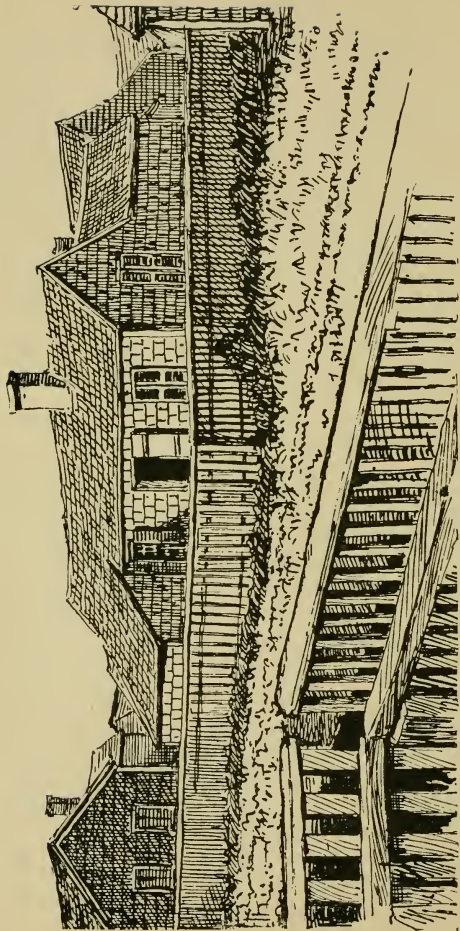
Some of the houses had become the occasional residences of well-to-do families in town and several of the more wealthy had erected, on new streets laid out, dwellings more pretentious and even approximating the styles of modern structures, though most of them, following the traditions of the place, were built in sections and embody more or less some of the peculiarities of shape and form which are seen in the old houses on The Bank.

## DECAY AND RENOVATION.

The decadence of the whale fishery resulted in an industrial paralysis within the limits of Nantucket. The men had been bred to the sea and to a special branch of service. Every industry of the inhabitants depended on that for its prosperity. Landsmen went elsewhere to seek employment in commercial cities. Seamen made their way into the merchant service. Ship after ship was sold. Store-houses were empty; wharves were deserted and went into decay. Candle houses were torn down and the timbers and lumber sold for old material. Capital sought investments in other fields. Sporadic efforts were made to organize new industries to stay the tide of emigration from the island, but one after another they failed and brought ruin or disaster upon the promoters. Year by year the population lessened. In 1849, near a thousand of the young men sailed for California to seek their fortunes in the land of gold. The values of real property on all parts of the island fell until zero was nearly reached. Even then there was little demand and fewer sales. Houses and lots in The Town sold for a fifth or sixth of the original cost of the buildings. On The Bank matters were even worse. Families emigrating offered the little houses for sale at any price. Whaling captains, then out of employment, with but slender

incomes from their savings purchased dwellings there and sought by fishing to eke out a subsistence. Some of them, though beyond the three score and ten of man's allotted life, still continue in the pursuit, and each Spring and Fall venture out on the waters. Other houses were kept in the family that their sons might gain a livelihood by fishing and have shelter during the night and in storms. But 'Seonset cottages had no value. One of the best and most commodious now on The Bank was bought by an old captain on his return from California, for \$75 and two quintals of codfish. Year after year he has occupied it at night during the fishing season, while by day he is braving the dangers of the deep in his dory. Another was sold for a hundred dollars. A third, for a long time, was rented at six dollars a year.

Matters went from bad to worse until 1879, when the population of the island had diminished to little over three thousand souls. In that year a well built house comparatively modern, but constructed after the 'Seonset pattern was sold with two acres of land adjoining, at auction, to close up an estate, for \$127. Another commodious modern built house containing fifteen rooms, fairly finished, with a half dozen out buildings, seven acres of land and a 'Seonset cottage built on the edge of The Bank, 300 feet distant from the surf were offered to a New York man, by the executors of an estate, for \$1,400. The buildings could not have been replaced for near three times that amount and the furniture for less than \$500. Frightened at the unheard of cheapness, the party did not dare to accept the offer. Within three years it was sold in separate lots for \$2,500, and six years after the offer was made, it could not have been purchased for \$10,000. For a new morning of prosperity had dawned upon Nantucket, and especially upon The Bank where the sun daily rises before it from the sea.



Ye Widow's House, Hyr Home



Near the close of the late civil war, an occasional family from "The Continent," as the natives call the main land, visited Siasconset and hired one of the little houses ready furnished, to enjoy the invigorating air, bathe in the surf and experience a season of absolute rest, to return to their homes in the Autumn recruited for the cares and labors of another year. The advantages of the situation gradually became more widely known and each year the number of visitors increased until, at last, every house which its owner would consent to let found tenants for the summer in families of refinement, intelligence and even wealth, from most of the principal cities from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and as far as the west coast of South America. The dilapidated shingles were torn off and replaced by new ones. Next they were white or yellow washed, and some at last painted. Fences were repaired. Old shutters or blinds gave place to new ones, or they were placed on windows that had never known them before. The interiors were repaired, furbished and tidied up, and now the little dwellings, some portions of which may be two centuries old, and all evolved from fishermen's cabins, but with the same charming quaintness of style, are rented each season at sums for which the owners, twenty years ago, would have gladly sold them. A second hotel was built, to which, one "annex" after another was added until its principal building within a few feet of the beach looms up in larger proportions than all its other parts. The town authorities awakened to the fact that Nantucket had still a future as a summer resort, as a haven of rest for tired out business men and brain workers, and a sanitarium for invalids. They improved the roads. The little passage ways between the houses on The Bank, not more than 10 feet in width nor more than 25 feet long, have been dignified as streets and christened with the names of 'Sconset families.

Street lamps have been put up and are nightly lighted. A little railway has been completed from The Town which skirts the south shore of the island, giving the visitors a splendid view of the ocean during the greater portion of its length; and since the advent of the locomotive, within a single season more strangers visit Siasconset than in a quarter of a century before.

In the meantime, the demand for the little cottages exceeded the supply. Persons who had become enamored of 'Sconset cottage life, purchased land on The Bank and undertook to supply the demand. Within three years, previous to 1885, over twenty houses were built and furnished to rent to summer visitors, while nearly as many more were erected by families for their own occupancy, and the work of improvement continues each year. Some of the new structures are modern and ornate in style, in strange contrast with the generally modest architecture of the island, and markedly so when compared with the 'Sconset cottages. Others follow the old traditions, except that the rooms are more commodious, and have complements of furniture and housekeeping appliances to ensure the comforts of the occupants.

The popularity of The Bank, as a sea-side home, is largely due to favorable climatic influences. It is on an island 17 miles in length, following a line through its center, with a width, at its greatest breadth, of four and a half miles. Its shape is irregular and will be best understood by a reference to the map. Sixty miles distant from the continent, the hot land breezes are unknown. To the north is still water, except during the prevalence of heavy gales. On the east and south the surf is ever beating upon the beach. The island has but one harbor of any importance and that the port of Nantucket, not far from midway between its eastern and western extremities. An extension of this to



the north and east, a distance of six miles, affords admirable facilities for safe rowing and sailing. To and from this harbor all visitors to the island come and go.

The climate is equable. The insular situation will in part, account for it. Being narrow, every breeze that is wafted over it is from the sea, and there is scarce ever a time when there is not more or less movement of the air. Hot days are hardly ever known. The mercury seldom rises above the point of summer heat. In observations extending over six years, it reached as high as 89 degrees but four times; and it does not mount above 82 degrees more than half a dozen days during a season. On those days the duration of warmth, so unusual, is never more than three or four hours, and then the sea breezes make visitors unconscious of what might elsewhere be an oppressive heat. At such times the thermometers in Boston and New York register the temperature far up in the nineties, and they sometimes reach a hundred and over. But as nightfall approaches, the air becomes delightfully cool and during the hours devoted to sleep a pair of woolen blankets is always an acceptable covering.

In the winter the temperature is correspondingly higher than on the main land. During the summer the nearly vertical rays of the sun penetrate the shallow waters which surround the island, and impart to them its heat. The winds passing over the waters receive from them their warmth and are blown upon the surface of the island. To the east and south is the Gulf Stream, with its warm currents from the tropics perpetually moving past the coast, and the western line of which is only 30 miles distant. Its existence was first discovered by the adventurous fishermen of Nantucket, and by them was made known to navigators. Winds from the south and east passing over it receive warmth from that source. Thus with the cold

winds tempered by the ocean currents before reaching the island, Autumn frosts are kept back until the last of October, and sometimes until November. Snow is seldom seen on the island. Sleighing is so infrequent as to be a curiosity. Ice does not form of sufficient thickness to be cut for storage more than one year out of two, and hence the greater portion consumed is brought from the rivers of Maine. The mean range of the thermometer in winter is several degrees higher and in the summer as much lower, than in Boston.

By reason of its equable climate Nantucket has become popular as a resort for invalids in winter as well as in summer. Mr. Charles O'Connor said at the close of his first summer's residence "In my opinion, between June and September, Nantucket has no equal as a cool and healthy summer resort and I shall probably make it my permanent home." Six months later, when he had passed a winter on the island, what had been a probability became a fact; for he continued to live on Nantucket during the remainder of his life, and made but few and very brief visits to New York when some special interest made it imperative. In September, 1883, he said to a friend that he should probably never leave the island again alive, but in March, 1884, he found it necessary to visit the city; and during his absence he contracted a severe cold. Three weeks after he became severely ill and died.

The presence of shallow water and the nearness of the Gulf Stream have an ameliorating effect in summer upon the temperature of the waters that wash the southern and eastern shores of the island. To this fact is due the popularity of 'Sconset beach for surf bathing. From early in July until late in September, the waters are scarce ever uncomfortable and are always invigorating. Visitors who are familiar with seaside resorts from Mount Desert to

Cape May speak in the highest praise of the comfort, pleasure and wholesome result of bathing in the waters off The Bank.



*Y<sup>e</sup> Doris att Sonjett Beach.*

## REST AND APPETITE.

Purple and fine linen are in no demand at 'Sconset. Flannel shirts for men and flannel dresses for women are in keeping, and if not the regulation costume might as well be. "Plug" hats are only affected by well-to-do natives, in The Town. Old clothes come into play and he who criticises does it at his peril. Now and then a family on their first visit wear white shirts and fashionable dresses. They are not ostracised in social circles nor even frowned upon by a despotic public opinion. Their example is neither contagious nor infectious, and the Common Council have never passed an ordinance requiring them to be put in quarantine. The life of even the ultra dude, gotten up in the most elaborate style of man millinery, would not be in danger. And to the free and easy life that pervades The Bank is also due its popularity as a seaside home.

During the first week the stranger would be astonished at the amount of rest he can put in, if drowsiness admitted of the emotion. But that is impossible. Twelve hours a day passed in slumber is not an unusual experience. During the other twelve he is only sleepy.

Marvelous stories are told in illustration of the somnolency which languidly greets the visitor. Captain William Baxter (of whom more hereafter), is authority for the

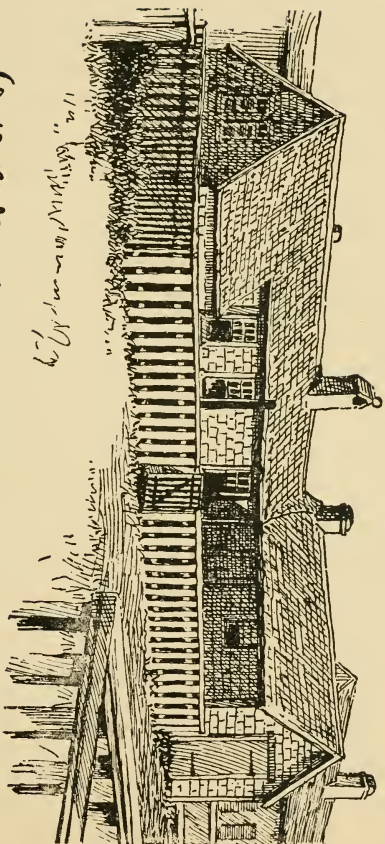
statements which follow. There is not a man on the island who will not go bonds for his truthfulness—at times. He says that strangers have fallen asleep when but half through with a sneeze, thus leaving the sternutatory effort incomplete, with muscles unrelaxed, and the whole face presenting the continuous appearance of enjoying the ecstatic orgasm of a resonant sneeze, until, on waking, the final explosion is reached, and the features relax and assume their natural expression.

Still more singular was the case of a lightning rod man who visited The Bank one season and made a dead set for Captain George W. Coffin. Everybody on the island knows that the Captain cannot say "No," unless he does it under a misapprehension, for he is too obstinate to do it under compulsion. Like others who dispense deceptive expedients to eliminate death from thunderbolts, this particular visitor had enticing and insidious ways. He did, then and there, before the Captain was aware of it, seduce him into ordering a lightning rod to be put on his dwelling; also one for his grocery store; likewise a third for his barn; moreover a fourth to be attached to his kerosene barrel; and was in the midst of a convincing argument that, without a fifth on his hen roost, and a sixth on his pig pen he hazarded his chickens and eggs in presenti and his pork in futuro, when, by good fortune that delicious languor which follows the inhalation of 'Sconset air came upon the designing lightning rod man, and in just two minutes by the watch, his eyes were closed in a delightful sleep in the Captain's big arm chair. Climatic influence came to Captain Coffin's rescue. In a moment, he had recovered from the persuasive eloquence to which he had been subjected, and quick to perceive the advantage of his situation, with the help of his neighbors he put the sleeping sharper on his load of lightning rods and started him off on the road to The Town.

When the wagon touched the cobble stones on Orange street, he was awakened by the jar. He could not understand what it all meant. Afterwards, when the real facts of the case illuminated his inner consciousness, he told Captain Joe Clapp that he had never been so abused in all his philanthropic labors as he had been at 'Sconset; and further, that the lightning might strike every blanked house in the village before he would make an effort to save a shingle.

But the most extraordinary fact I have yet to relate. A lady in Worcester, was sent by her husband to Captain Baxter to be conveyed to 'Sconset for a season of rest and quiet which her health greatly needed. Too much fatigued to write of her safe arrival the first day, she waited until the second, when, having addressed the envelope, she started for the post office. As she was about to put the letter in the box, she was overcome by drowsiness and in the confusion of ideas which followed, she dropped herself in the box, instead of the letter, and the next moment was fast asleep, and she didn't discover her mistake until three hours later when she found herself delivered! So much for the effect of air in producing sleep.

But stranger stories are told of the results to the human appetite. It is not alone that groceries, provisions and meats are in good variety and quality, and fish fresh caught within sight of visitors, and poultry, eggs, milk and vegetables grown upon farms adjacent to the village are placed on the table before them. The tonic properties of the the air increase desire for food and facilitate digestion. A New York auctioneer whose reputation for high morality is phenomenal, stated to me his experience. He arrived on The Bank after suffering for a year from nervous prostration caused by excessive indulgence in the truth at sales, and, during which time, he had had but little sleep



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"Edinburgh" 1877

Captain Adam Cress, Hy Hore



and only the memory of an appetite. He took a little cottage for the season where he and his family felt that, at least, they could have rest and quiet. The first week's experience was promising. He was able to run the gamut of the bill of fare of the Ocean View House, and thenceforward he got around three square meals a day, and he never flinched until he had successfully wrestled with every dish the proprietor dared to present for his discussion. Between meals, he foraged for something to stem the resistless tide of appetite. A waitress was assigned to serve him at the table. She returned to Boston before the season was half through. The next week her funeral was largely attended. Another stood it out to the end of the season. Her muscles became so strengthened and toughened by the amount of travel necessary to satisfy the cravings of the monstrous appetite of that auctioneer that, on her return to the city, she entered the lists for a six day's walking match, go-as-you-please, and carried off the stakes and half the gate money. But with the landlord, the patronage of that man was a matter of serious concern if not of grave solemnity. Day after day he saw his stock of provisions disappear in the omnivorous maw of the seemingly starving man and he was sick at heart as the season's profits slowly diminished under the withering influence of his hunger. Still the landlord accepted the inevitable with the calmness that men exhibit in the sight of death. The time came when they had to part. The scene was one never to be forgotten. In solemn and regretful tones the boarder broke the intelligence. He told his host that another year he should return. The landlord heaved a sigh. But when the guest added that he intended to keep house, the face of the host lightened. He grasped the hand of the guest and with visible emotion tremblingly told him that he was his friend for life. Little did he appreciate that auctioneer as a



living, moving, breathing, example of the excellence of his table. The thought uppermost in his mind was that, another year, he should perhaps retrieve the losses the ravenous appetite of the boarder had entailed upon him during that. It is pleasant to see such exhibitions of tender sentiment in a world in which ingratitude is so often shown.

A few days after the landlord told a friend, in the strictest confidence, that it was bad enough to have a boarder die under his roof, but it was even pleasant, as compared with having some people live under it. He didn't mention any names, but the gentleman to whom it was told caught on to the significance of the statement the moment it was made. He didn't want any more of that style of invalids.

## LIFE ON THE BANK.

The meaning of the word cottage in society is strangely perverted. It is defined in the dictionaries to be "a small habitation; a cot; a hut; formerly limited to a poor or shabby habitation, but now applied also to any neat or tasteful dwelling." As currently understood the word may be used with respect to a dwelling three stories in height, with an attic and projecting windows, and with a veranda capable of sitting three score people in comfort. Within there may be twenty spacious apartments and wide hallways and balustrades, richly upholstered furniture, and plastered walls hung with fine paper, or even frescoed and covered with works of art to make a still wider departure from the simplicity of the structure which the name would indicate. If it were within a small interior city or thriving village, or were in the suburbs of a large city and occupied by a prosperous or wealthy citizen, it would be called a mansion. Translated to the seaside it becomes a "cottage" even though it may have cost, with its appointments, from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

Life within it brings all the cares and responsibilities upon the wife that exist in an urban home. The primary object of removing to it is to secure rest, and quiet, and freedom from care. The very size of the building of itself

defeats the purpose. The cares of a family in different houses, furnished in equal style, can be accurately computed by a comparison of their cubic capacity. A dwelling containing 30,000 cubic feet will entail upon the occupant, five times the amount of responsibility and labor, of a structure containing 6,000 cubic feet. Besides, a large house invites the visits of traveling friends at a season when, perhaps, their presence is felt to be little less than an intrusion, although they would be welcome at other times and under different circumstances. In a cottage in reality, social calls replace protracted visits and then they are made less frequent than they would be were the compliment paid to the family in more pretentious quarters, and the object of the summer's emigration is realized. Otherwise the only benefit resulting is that, which proceeds from a change of air and surroundings. In the one case there is real cottage life; in the other it is fashionable life with all its cares carried to the shore.

But there is another feature. When comforts are assured, the enjoyments of life are heightened by change. From elegant appointments and surroundings and bewildering space, one finds pleasure in snugness and simplicity. Elaborate dinners in course, are gladly dispensed with to enjoy wholesome food that savors of freshness and needs no relish to quicken the appetite.

In the little houses on 'Sconset Bank all these advantages proceeding from a transition from life in a city home are realized, change of air, quiet, rest, and contrast, with a maximum of comfort and a minimum of care. They are real cottages. They were built strongly and compactly to resist the elements and afford shelter and comfort for the occupants, and with no thought that they would ever be in demand as the residences of summer visitors. Year after year they have been and are still occupied by the

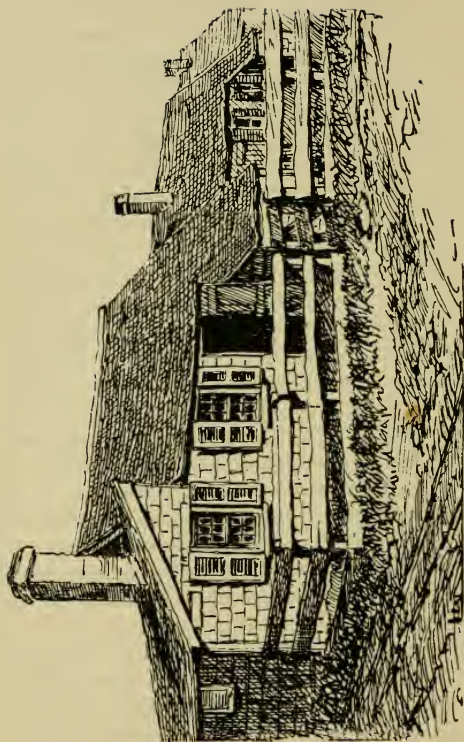
families of strangers who have found pleasure in the midst of homely surroundings presenting a sharp contrast with their homes during nine months of the year.

Their appreciation of cottage life finds expression in the names they bestow upon their little homes, which are painted upon strips of board and nailed over the portals. Some are changed from year to year with the change of tenants; others remain for successive seasons. "DEW DROP INN" seemed to invite the thirsty passer to cross the threshold of the six feet doorway. It was a holiow mockery. The hostess had not an inn-keeper's license. The sign did not deceive anybody. "N'YUM N'YUM HUT" suggested the serene satisfaction of the inmates over a 'Sconset breakfast, responding to the demands of an appetite sharpened by the ocean air. "WANNACKMAMACK LODGE" tempts strangers to risk the rupture of the buccinnator muscle in the vain attempt to pronounce the name. "OKORWAW WIGWAM" was occupied by a white tribe from Boston. They were peaceably disposed savages and I never, in passing, experienced a sense of danger to life or limb. Neither "big injun," nor squaw, nor papoose, sought my scalp. "CASTLE BANDBOX" was the home of some merry young girls from Washington. And didn't they laugh as they played housekeeping all alone by themselves? In "BIRD'S NEST COTTAGE" were nestled the little ones under the care of a loving mother. In "SANITAS FELICITAS" was ensconced the family of a Providence gentleman. A genial old shipmaster, long in the shady side of life, recalling memories of youth, named his little home "SUNNY SIDE," where he and the charming companion of his declining years extended to their friends a welcome. "BARNABY LODGE" was the elysium of some Philadelphia ladies who sought out 'Sconset on the map and came thither to pass their vacation. "LE CHALET" was over the door of the cottage of two charming

French ladies, from New York who spent their summers on The Bank. "SANS SOUCI" tells of careless ease that a Rhode Island family enjoy in their little summer home. "MULTI IN PARVO" describes the marvelous capacity of a little house in which a distinguished New York clergyman and his family found comfort for the Season. "SVARGALOKA" the Sanskrit paradise, is over the portals of one dwelling, while "PARADISE" in the vernacular, describes the peace that exists in another. "NAUTICAN LODGE" preserves another Indian name. "UTOPIA" describes the ideal life led by a bright family from Medford in an old structure that has not been shingled for perhaps a couple of generations. "HEART'S EASE" is equally suggestive of a peace of mind that dwelleth within the shingled sides. "CLOSE QUARTERS" concisely states the character of the accommodations in another house. "KANSAS DUGOUT" is descriptive of the rudimentary dwelling in which a family from Achison dwell. "THE PARSONAGE" has not within the memory of man been occupied by a parson, though one could get solid comfort under its roof. Some jolly young men told how close they were compelled to live when they painted on a shingle the words "SPOON FASHION" and nailed it over the door. "K. K." bothered strangers and residents alike until the inmates explained that the letters were the initials of "KAUPHIN KOTTAGE." An orthodox quaker from western New York, in violation of the spirit, if not the letter of the discipline displayed over his door words of worldly import borrowed from the language of song at that, "DOLCE FAR NIENTE." "THE SARDINE BOX" needs no explanation. But perhaps cottage life is nowhere better and more concisely stated than appears over the door of an old house.

"THE ANCHORAGE,

"Give me my scollop shell of quiet."



Myrtle Colman, Her House.

The resident visitors are largely women and children. Men are a scarce commodity. If married women want for a time to be rid of their husbands, as they sometimes do, 'Sconset is the place to go to. The success of single women in getting them is not so marked. The Bank is not a matrimonial exchange. At no time are there men enough to go around. The place is too far distant from our commercial cities to admit of frequent visits or protracted stays by husbands and marriageable men whom the exigencies of business require elsewhere. At the beginning of the season there is a redundancy of skirts and a corresponding scarcity of bifurcated garments seen moving along the narrow streets and on the beach. In June and July, men come in units and twos and threes. Later they may appear in tens with occasional visitations in scores; but at no time is there even an approximate balance between the sexes. A man is appreciated. If he is not at a premium, he is at least quoted at par. He who is at a discount in social circles at home, when on The Bank is received for all he is worth and sometimes for a little more. He feels his importance. He may attribute his success to his manly graces suddenly developed by inhaling the air of the ocean. The thought that it is the result of the inexorable laws of supply and demand is a painful reflection. Come to it he does at last, and he realizes that, on his return, he must, in the field of every day social intercourse, sink to his normal level in the estimation of women. Still it is a satisfaction to reflect that one has been so far "bulled" on the social exchange, as to have been regarded even for a season as a fancy security.

At the hops, which the hotel proprietors give at different periods during the season for the young people, the anthropophagous being who can dance is above par. He is even a bonanza. He can have his pick of partners. The



callow youth is ruthlessly dragged from the care of his mother, and the vigorous man of middle age is beset by a female press gang deaf to all entreaty. Anything short of the possession of a cork leg, or a timber toe, or the affidavits of two disinterested and reputable persons that, to their knowledge, he does not know how to dance will excuse him from active service. If he can move through the figures, even awkwardly, he will pass muster. If he cannot dance he can make believe and by his self-sacrificing efforts afford an opportunity for somebody else to dance.

And dancing on The Bank carries with it all that the word implies. The Nantucket youths and maidens set an example of lively movement that becomes contagious. They mean to get their money's worth at every hazard. At 'Sconset, dancing is not a mincing, gliding, sauntering through the figures in languid movement, like unto the halting walk of a convalescent kitten trying to conform her steps to the cadences of a jews harp in the mouth of an American small boy. Its significance is life and activity as the outward expression of the inward buoyancy of youthful spirit, breathing the atmosphere of freedom within the sound of music, which the French philosopher Fourier, fitly called "a measured harmony."

I have often been present on these occasions. But I am in the sere and yellow leaf. Those pleasures are not reserved for me. Still, as I have looked on the enlivening scene, I have felt the fires of youth coursing through the arteries of my ancient legs, and one by one the wrinkles depart therefrom as if they had received a gentle hint that their room was better than their company. But corns, and bunions, and chilblains, and gout, and rheumatic deposits in the joints, and atrophy of muscular tissue and depleted nerve force, and the vis inertia generally which inhereth to him with one foot in the grave, forbade. Without envy did I

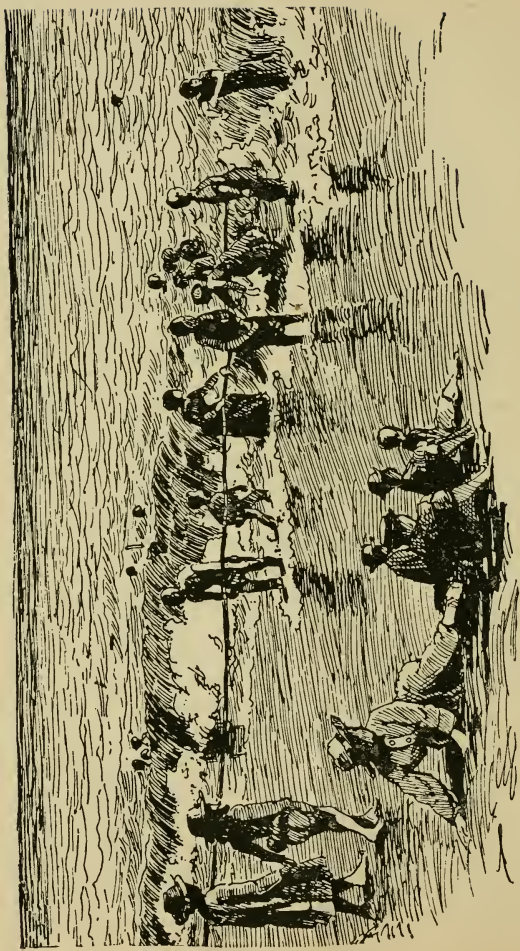


keep my seat in a retired corner of the hall, glad that I could look down upon legs that had a creditable record and think of myself as one of the great company of the "Honorable Has Beens," whose ranks are yearly decimated by the Great Destroyer, but are as rapidly recruited from veterans retiring from service.

But water is more dense than air. If too weak to stand the continued strain of dancing, in the denser element I can sustain my *avoids*. Buffeting in the surf gives me a new lease of life. The waves at 'Sconset beach seems to me like surging waters of perpetual youth. In them, I fear neither dashing billows nor receding undertow. My endurance has been tested on more than one occasion. My fame as a swimmer is Bank wide. The importunities that press upon me to teach others the art are numerous. It is the ambition of every lady who visits the seaside to be able to swim. It matters not that she may be worth a million; or that she has reached high on the ladder of fame in creative art; or that she has become an acknowledged leader of human thought. All that is nothing compared with the rapturous reflection that she can do something which few or none of her lady friends can.

I met with a marvelous success as a professor. I did not make much money out of it but I had lots of fun. But my professional career was brought to an abrupt termination. There are some things in the life of even an aquatic expert engaged in imparting his skill to ladies that are not altogether ecstatic. Among my most promising pupils were some young girls from Baltimore, who had registered a vow that they would never get married, even under the most severe provocation, until they had become so expert in the waters that they could duck their husbands in case exemplary punishment for any minor wickedness was needed. They were under my tutelage for several days.

Ye Bythys, in Wythys, offe offe, offe offe, offe offe.



It was wonderful what a cargo of confidence they carried in my abilities as a teacher and the accuracy of my judgment in keeping them just on the dividing line between danger and safety which enhances the pleasure of being in the waves.

One morning I took one of my sea nymphs beyond the line of breakers and set her to floating, taking care to walk close by her in shore, so that in case of fright, I could assist her in. She lay as lightly on the waters as a cork. I could not resist the impulse which bade me tell her that she was beautiful to my admiring gaze. I had hardly paid this tribute to her loveliness when she asked me to add to the charm of the picture by floating at her side. This was too much. If there is any man short of a centenarian who can be insensible to such a compliment, set him down as a muff; advise him to get an engagement in a theater where a real corpse is wanted to enliven the play, and then take a dose of ratsbane that he may be ready to fulfill the engagement. I am not that sort of a man, If I have not carried juvenescence into old age, at least, I have periods when, spanning near three quarters of a century I seem to have been borne back into the Spring time of life. Such words from a beautiful girl made me feel as if I was floating in the empyrean instead of being tumbled about by the surging waves off 'Sconset beach, which spare neither age, sex, nor previous condition of matrimonial servitude. I acceded to the suggestion. In a moment, hand in hand together, May and December, in sweet proximity, were borne upon the bounding billows. No small boy on Christmas morning, with vision greeted by a mouth harmonicon, a Noah's ark, a wheelbarrow, a peg top, a follow ball, and a pair of skates, and above all, a saw, hammer and nails and a room full of furniture at hand inviting his early attention, could have felt more happy.

While bathing in what became a sea of delight, I asked her to recline her face on my manly breast. Though I didn't mean it, she said she would. The thought intensified the rapture of my situation, I became oblivious to the fact that a thundering big billow was coming towards us. Now, whether my fair water nymph had not been correctly taught in the anatomy and physiology class at school, or whether her ideas had become a little mixed, I don't know. At any rate, in the effort to comply with my suggestion, just as the wave broke upon us, she had evidently got the idea that my breast was located below the diaphragm; for driven forward by the charging breaker she planted her head against my abdominal belt with the force of a catapult. Quicker than the lightning calculator could count half, I doubled up like the closing of a ponderous jack-knife, and in that ungraceful attitude turned seven summersaults out of a possible eight, before I felt myself stranded upon the beach, sneezing in a wild paroxysm as a mark of disapprobation of the practical joke the boisterous Sea King had played upon me when I was reveling in the delights of a briny paradise. And not only that, but my ears; and nose; and mouth; and stomach contained sand enough to fill a contract for plastering a country meeting house. Above all I became conscious of an acute costaritis (belly ache it is generally called, but I prefer the technical term because it gives dignity to the malady), that caused me to twist into contortions whereof the india-rubber man had never dreamed. The first thing I saw and heard when I looked around was that delightful minx, who had been safely borne to the beach on the crest of the breaker that had so engulfed me, saying, "Oh isn't it fun?" Fun? O Lord! O Lord! But I concealed my emotions, though it was with a desperate struggle; and I laughed with all the vivacity of a congregation of ghosts holding high carnival

in the midst of a November fog in a secluded graveyard at midnight.

My manly breast has not been vouchsafed since that eventful morning to pillow the head of any damsel on sea or shore, for reasons that are entirely satisfactory to myself, and which nobody has any business to inquire about. The pursuit of knowledge is sometimes, even with well meaning people, carried to an unreasonable point. In such instances, a proper self respect demands that it be discouraged. I may state, however, that, on retiring to rest that night, she, with whom I pull in matrimonial harness, convinced me that the breast I so generously had tendered to another was held by her as a life-tenant under a contract that was irrevocable, and that she had never authorized me to let it either for a term, at a fixed rental, or an occupancy at pleasure by another to the exclusion of her rights in the premises. Above all, she objected to a joint-tenancy or a tenancy in common. I had never looked at the legal aspects of the matter before; and without going to the office of 'Squire Coffin, in The Town, to look at the authorities, I made up my mind before breakfast that, perhaps, I had better acquiesce in her view of the law.

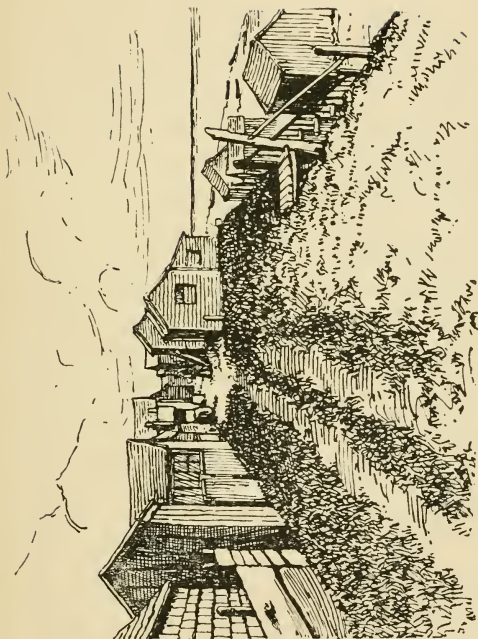
## PERILS.

There are dangers which may beset the bather on the beach and for which the billows are not responsible. Max Wattigan came to The Bank at my special invitation to pass the season. He is a friend of mine in the soap and tallow line. A mischance made him the principal figure in an episode, the recollections of which, in his mind, are equal to the horrors of a dozen nightmares. At the seaside his passion is bathing "in the buff" a similitude employed by naughty boys to express the idea of the uniform seen in the Garden of Eden before the fashion of wearing fig leaves had been introduced from Paris, as the rudimentary promise of textile fabrics, which to-day are typical of our advanced civilization. The appearance in 'Sconset waters without a bathing dress between the hours of 6 A. M. and 8 P. M. is prohibited by an ordinance passed long since by the common council. (See ordinances of Siasconset, 1793, chapter 234, Atheneum library.)

Max is an early riser. With the crowing of Captain Aldridge's patriarchal rooster he went forth to the bath house, divested himself of his raiment, plunged into the surf, and, for the nonce, was oblivious of the presence of hungry blue fish which, in playful mood, might snap at his

# અનેકલિખિત ગ્રંથોનો સંગ્રહ

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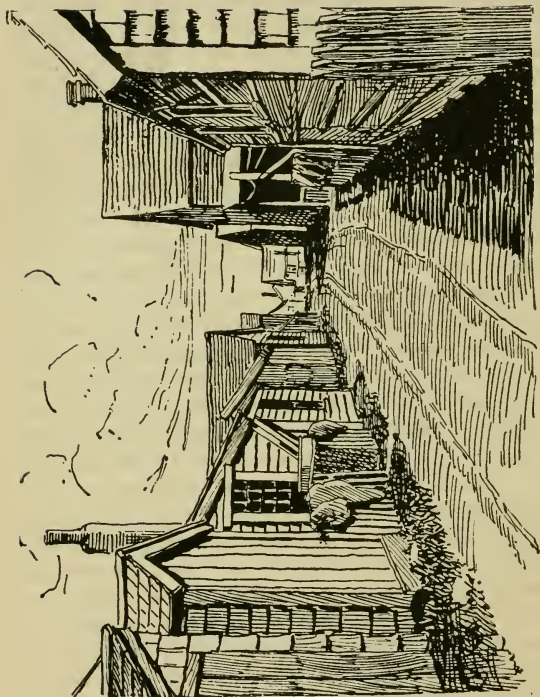
inviting nose, bite his dexter digits, or feed on his sinister toes. After a half hour's enjoyment he went to his breakfast with a stomach stimulated to digest anything offered, from a broiled belying pin to a book agent's conscience roasted and garnished with shingle nails.

During the season there was a lady, an amateur artist, whose ambition was to reproduce the brilliant effects of a sunrise from the sea. For several mornings after her arrival she was disappointed. Fog, and rain, and massive clouds intervened to obscure the view which was to be her soul's delight. Of the existence of the lady, and much more the object of her artistic ambition, Max was in ignorance, or their painful meeting would never have occurred. One morning she looked forth from her window and saw that the appointed time had come. The sunlight was reddening the edges of the clouds that floated above the eastern horizon. While she was hastily preparing to capture the coming sunrise, Max was already laving in the refreshing waters. Now, charging against an angry billow as it approached in threatening array, then plunging under a surging breaker, and next floating as lightly as an ostrich plume over the wave crest and sinking into the watery furrow only to rise again, thus was he the sport of the dancing billows until he should assert his strength, and resisting their force, should in triumph make his way to the beach.

It was while he was thus sporting amid the breakers that he glanced up toward the land and saw a female figure moving hurriedly down The Bank in the direction of where he was. Her eyes were fixed upon the delicate fringe of crimson and gold that made the buoyant clouds before her a scene of enchantment, the recollection of which would be to her a source of perpetual pleasure. He quickly left for shore and concealed himself behind a

dory, thinking that her approach meant only a morning walk on the beach whence she would soon depart. To his dismay, she produced a camp stool and planted it within fifty feet of where he was hidden from her view, and in a line between him and the bath house wherein his clothes were suspended. She opened her color box and commenced to wash in masses of warm tints which made the floating vapors, now rich in aureate beauty, the precursor of the gorgeous sunburst that was sure to follow. From around the dory Max stole brief glances at the poetic spinster and took in the startling novelty of his situation. Little by little he comprehended its full significance. He was on the windward side of the boat, and the morning breezes soon sent a cold chill through his frame. With his back to the north, lumbago; or acute Bright's disease; or inflammatory rheumatism was a contingent result. To turn his face threatened pneumonia; or peritonitis; or even quick consumption. He waited in the hope that, with dextrous skill, she would quickly lay in the colors, and then, hearing the distant echoes of hunger resounding from the walls of an empty stomach, would find the ardor of artistic enthusiasm chilled by the reflection that woman was not made alone for the ideal, however grand. He mistook the character of the one before him. She seemed glued to the camp stool, and the seat itself was evidently anchored to the beach. At last the appalling fact was unfolded to his mind that he was a naked descendant of Adam, imprisoned out of doors by a Turner in petticoats, inspired by a too lofty regard for high art to allow a detail to escape her in so rich a display of nature's wondrous grouping of the beautiful.

Brighter and brighter the rays of light shot above the cloud masses until the mighty Monarch of Day himself burst upon her vision in all his warmth and effulgence and



A Ancient street on ye Banks

threw upon the waves a field of dazzling sheen, that made the waters look like moving ripples of molten gold. The wind was stiffening from the northeast, and cold chills were sent through brain, and spinal column, and muscle, and bone. In the agony of his situation, the mercury seemed to have fallen to near the freezing point. It became apparent that he must disclose his presence or else his stiffened corpse be viewed by an unsympathizing magistrate, to whom, by the statutes of Massachusetts, had been confided the holding of inquests to ascertain the cause of death. Raising himself so that his head and shoulders appeared above the gunwale of the boat, he said in a most mild and apologetic tone "Madam, I beg pardon, but"—He got no further. His words were interrupted by a shriek. Then, as if a mine had exploded under her, she made a spring heavenwards. Camp stool; and brushes; and water cup; and color box; and the aggregate paraphernalia of a boss artist were scattered upon the sand, and the frightened owner was flying towards The Bank with skirts disordered and fluttering wildly in the morning breezes. And it was not until she had disappeared around one of the cottages on The Bank that Max ran for the bath house as if the devil was after him. Having quickly resumed his clothing, he sneaked into the hotel, changed his suit for another entirely different in appearance and came into breakfast, yawning as if he had been disturbed in his rest by a late nocturnal banquet in which hard boiled eggs; and lobster salad; and pickled pigs feet; and strong coffee had been the principal constituents of the bill of fare.

At noon time, Max sauntered over the beach in the locality which had been the scene of this distressing episode. His face wore an air of meditation that was akin to sadness. His eyes caught sight of a piece of shining

metal that shone brightly from the surrounding sand. A nearer view disclosed the fact that it was a lady's—well, something of a suspensory character that is used to keep the garments that cover the lower extremities up in place. He was about to pick it up, when the thought of her, who was the probable proprietor, crossed his mind. Sadly he turned his face away and left the appurtenance where it was, not wishing to preserve what might be a memento of an experience fraught with so many unpleasant recollections.

## CAPTAIN BAXTER.

But a still greater peril awaits the unsuspecting visitor. Captain William Baxter is neither a pirate, nor an insurance agent, nor a bank president nor a cashier. It were better for the victims of his insidious wiles that he were, for then they could protect themselves with horse pistols, or cutlasses, or Gatling guns. His misdeeds are neither crimes nor misdemeanors to be proceeded against by indictment; nor are they torts for which a civil action for damages can be maintained. They are without malice, except in a Pickwickian sense. But mercy is no part of his moral composition. Nurseling and centenarian; parent and child; husband and wife; lover and mistress; townsman and stranger are alike the objects of his relentless jokes. Neither devotee nor unbeliever; professional man nor layman is spared. Day and night, winter and summer, spring and autumn his victims, not once, but a half a dozen times suffer before they learn to be on the alert. With him youthful spirits are still manifested in advanced age. His heart is as full of generous impulse, his spirits as light, his vivacity as marked and his appreciation of fun as keen at 80 as they were at 18.

William Baxter was born in 1805, on Nantucket. His father was a whaling captain. As a matter of course, the

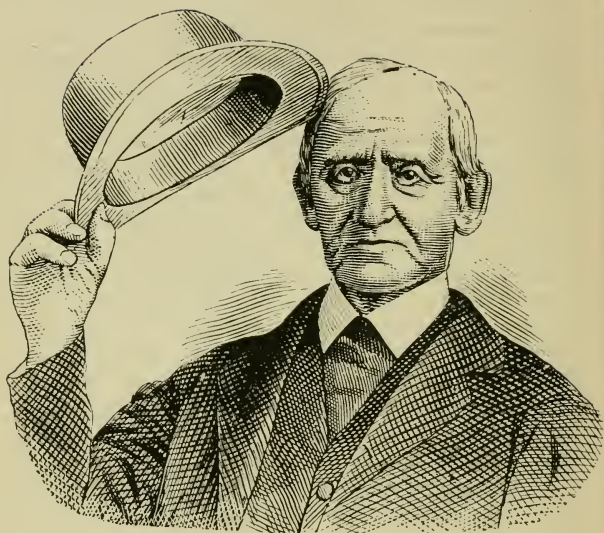
son was bred to the sea. When he retired from service he was the master of a whaling ship. He has been all over the world. During intermittent illuminations of truth he will recount interesting episodes drawn from his own experience and some of which are even pathetic. Yet, before the conclusion of the conversation, with features demure and solemn he will regale one with a story to make the blood curdle, only to find at its termination in one's sale and delivery in the perpetration of a preposterous joke. When the Captain left the waters he settled down in Nantucket. Like other men in The Town he was a frequent visitor to Siasconset, in the spring and fall, during the fishing season. Then, at night, the old captains after returning with their dories to the land would sit down in the room of some little cottage and swap lies in the most fraternal manner in recounting experiences in the past. On such occasions bigger sperm whales have been caught in Captain Brown Gardner's cottage than were ever struck in the Arctic seas. Captain Baxter's visits to The Bank were frequent, and at times they occurred every day. If anybody wanted to ride with him he was welcome. If he was able to pay for the accommodation, very well. If not, it didn't make any difference. The enterprise was organized upon principles as broad as humanity and good fellowship. He gave the needed wayfarer a ride, stuffed him with incredible stories in transitu, and if he was not satisfied with that he stuffed him with a dinner on his arrival at 'Sconset. He was everybody's friend when a favor was to be granted, but everybody's ruthless enemy when the opportunity occurred to play a joke.

And so it came to pass that, whenever he went to or came from Town he carried or brought letters and was entrusted with errands to attend to. At last his coming and going became such a matter of importance that his



failure to appear was sometimes the cause of inconvenience. At length what was begun as an incidental matter in the spirit of good nature, became a regular employment. It was the evolution of an unincorporated stage, express, and postal company, and Captain Baxter was president, director, stockholder, superintendent, agent, messenger, teamster, hostler—everything, except the propelling power of the wagon, which, to the surprise of everybody on The Bank he allowed the horses to furnish. And when Siasconset became a seaside resort, the means of transit of the island already existed. He received the passengers at the steamboat landing and carried them to their destination, often in the height of the season making two round trips a day, covering an aggregate distance of 30 miles. His vehicle was a Nantucket box wagon, one of the few on the island requiring a double team. A cover was put on to afford protection in case of inclement weather. As it was slowly dragged through the deep ruts of the sandy roads it became at last to be known as the “Swiftsure” and the line as the “Lightning Express.” But such arduous work as this, with its care and responsibility, did not tame the spirits of the old mariner. Fresh or tired he was always ready for a joke and could take as well as give.

When I took my departure for 'Sconset I was told to inquire for Captain Baxter when I reached the steamboat wharf at Nantucket, to trust to him for guidance, and that he would pilot me safely over the island. It was impressed upon me that he was serious and even solemn in his demeanor, and was especially sensitive to anything like levity or frivolity. There is an unsettled account between me and the man who told me that, which at the day of judgment will not be sponged from the slate. Thus far he has eluded my pursuit. I am going for his scalp and will have it, if I have to follow him to the gates of the New



Captaine Wilym Baxter, ye Aincient  
 Maryne & Commandr of ye  
 Sydewhele Crafte swyft = sure

Jerusalem. He knew what he was up to when he remorselessly put me into Captain Baxter's care. He had been there himself.

At the steamer's wharf I inquired for Baxter. He was pointed out. I approached him and was greeted with a saintly smile. I told him who I was and that I desired to go to Siasconset. He put his hand to his ear, acoustic fashion, and said that he was very hard of hearing. I repeated in a higher tone of voice. He replied that he had just shipped to a friend of his in Boston the last quintal he had, except what he wanted for his own use that very morning, but he would see if he could get some from somebody on The Bank. I put my mouth close to his ear and yelled the statement I had made. He seemed to get a grip on my idea for he led myself and party to his wagon, took out the tail board, helped us in, and just before night-fall we started on our trip. Hardly had we got beyond the edge of The Town when he told us of the dangers the journey involved. But he said we need have no uneasiness, as he felt confident he should land us in Siasconset in safety long before morning. As an all night trip amid darkness and fog, was not exactly the circus for which I had bought a ticket, with painful effort I screamed one question after another at him to obtain an explanation. As the result I was gradually enlightened. In substance the information I received was that the crossing of an intervening range of mountains, and especially the peril in following the shelving road that wound around the crest of Half Way Hill, was beset with dangers, for in the darkness of the night, it almost invited destruction; as a variation of a few inches in the course might precipitate the craft in which our hopes embarked, down a steep declivity perhaps hundreds of feet into a yawning chasm, and it might be, impale our bodies on the sharp branches of gigantic pines

which for centuries had been pushing their cones heavenward, but had never yet caught the rays of the sun, even at meridian. And he told me about the passage through a deep canyon beyond Bean Hill following a tortuous course amid titanic bowlders which, in the pliocene period of geological history had been brought down by mighty avalanches from the towering peaks above; and that he never went through it without thoughts of fear and trembling. He told me of disasters that had occurred. With impressive solemnity of manner he recounted times, places and circumstances. One I especially remember, because of the appalling details of the catastrophe. Captain Obed Bunker had started one morning from Quidnit with a box-cart, freighted with a peck basket of eggs, three quintals of codfish and 250 pounds of new potatoes, and at a place two points off the starboard bow of our wagon, in the position in which we were, his cart gave a lurch and she sheered off N. N. E. by E. half E. when the true course by the chart was S. E. by S., and that too when Captain Bunker, on starting in the morning, had only taken the regulation rations of Medford rum. After stating these horrors, Captain Baxter told me not to be afraid, that such disasters were now infrequent and that many a time he had gone through that chasm in the shadow of a storm cloud when, amid the gloom, an American citizen of full African descent, in the active pursuit of a black cat in mourning for her drowned progeny, through the labyrinths of a sub-cellar at midnight, in a thunder storm, would present a picture which, in comparison, would be of dazzling whiteness. Even this statement was anything but reassuring, and I didn't recover from the sense of danger until I reached the hotel tired from apprehension and hoarse from bawling into Captain Baxter's ears.

Awakened by the breakfast bell of the Ocean View House

the next morning, I arose. I looked out of the window to the west, heavenwards, thinking as the least reward for the dangers I had risked, my vision would be greeted by a picturesque mountain landscape. My sight followed from the firmament until it reached the horizon on an almost barren hill a couple of miles distant and perhaps 75 feet above the level of the sea. To such contemptible proportions had the mountains, pictured to my imagination, shrunk. Before me was a sandy roadway which extended as far as the eye could reach, with parallel ruts worn perhaps fifteen to eighteen inches deep into the light soil by the wheels of the vehicles, and the feet of the horses in travelling over the island. These were the yawning chasms and the fearful abysses, the vivid description of which had excited terror in my breast. Some stunted growths of scrub pine that, against heavy odds, were struggling against the presumption of bush-hood in the effort to attain the dignity of trees, were all there was to support the monstrous stories of the giants of the forest, which I had heard the night before.

I was not long in seeking out the betrayer of my trust and confidence. That he might not be misled by his infirmity of hearing into a misunderstanding of my meaning, I screamed into his ear that he was an ancient fraud with all the modern improvements. He told me not to strain my voice, as he had already recovered from his deafness by the use of hot applications of red pepper on his diaphragm the night before, and that now he could hear me if I spoke in a whisper. Well, I was furious! But he laughed in such a genial manner that my wrath was turned away. He said he had no hard feelings against me! From what followed I know his words were not uttered in mockery. He quietly beckoned me into the "wart" of his little house, wherein he produced an antique basket and drew there-

from a prehistoric bottle. By a natural sequence of events, the cork came out and he passed the bottle and asked me to take a swig. He said it was old Medford, vintage of 1816. Anybody who tries it will believe, as I did. In that mellow, heart warming draught was buried every vestige of the animosity that I had felt for that veteran of the sea. And yet, within a week, he had effected a second sale of my person. Again and again, it has occurred and, until I shall cross the Stygian waters, I shall never be free from Captain Baxter's jokes and even then he will play them upon my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns.

## THE EVOLUTION OF A POST OFFICE.

It took nearly two centuries to lift Siasconset to the dignity of a post village. The government allowed it to take care of itself. If that community is best governed which is governed the least, The Bank was the nearest approach to perfection in its political status. The only post office on the island was at Nantucket, and letters for 'Seonset were given to any resident, who came for them, or to anybody whom the postmaster happened to learn was going out. Correspondence was not heavy, and there was not an overweening anxiety on the part of the residents to read the reports of the stock market at the breakfast table. They had stock in The Bank in which every man was a shareholder and director, with neither president nor cashier to influence fear of defalcation or embezzlement. From it they received semi-annual dividends in fish, varying in amount with the humor of the clerk of the weather and the disposition of the cod to bite. So the people at 'Seonset were born; they grew, and married, and had children, and generation after generation never knew the luxury of government officers living among them.

As already stated, Captain Baxter, by general consent, had come to be entrusted as common carrier with the duty of bringing and taking the mails between 'Seonset



and The Town on his jaunts. At last it became a regular thing and gradually the inner consciousness of the residents were illuminated with the idea that he should be paid for his services. He was accorded one whole cent for each letter or paper carried in either direction. For an errand five cents was paid as his reward and a larger sum for the transportation of packages, according to size.

When, in the course of time, the village became the resort for summer visitors, there was a necessity for a place to receive and deliver mail matter, and the Captain's quaint old house became the depot. Strangers inquired for the post-office, and they were given the direction with a description of the house. But as the same description would apply to nearly every house on The Bank, it was often of no assistance, and perhaps two or three houses would be visited before the incipient post office was reached. To remedy this difficulty, the Captain, in clear violation of the statute in such case made and provided, had the words "POST OFFICE" painted on a shingle and nailed over his door. There was a thundering excitement in Washington when it was reported that, at Siasconset, somebody had dared thus to boldly defy the law! Correspondence was at once opened between the Post office department and the Superintendent of the Mail Service, in the Eastern Division. which was continued for several weeks. Concisely stated the imperative inquiry of the Post office Department was "Why is this thus?" The Superintendent of Mail Service, Eastern Division, replied in substance "I'm busted if I know." Communication was opened with the United States District Attorney for the District of Massachusetts, and three weeks were passed in writing and receiving letters to and from that legal functionary. Then the District Attorney began a correspondence with the United States Marshal of the District of Massachusetts.

A fortnight was passed in exchange of notes before it was finally determined that a deputy marshal of the United States should be dispatched to the island to learn and report the facts. At last the marshal took his departure. In him, the Government, for the time being, lived and moved and had its being, from the moment he left Wood's Hole on that eventful journey. He felt the importance of his mission and was determined to perform it conscientiously and without fear or favor. It was with these feelings that the Government left the steamer on its arrival at the wharf at Nantucket. As luck would have it the first man he met was Captain Baxter himself, standing by the Swiftsure, just ready to cut loose from her moorings to make her trip to The Bank. The Government said it wanted to go to Siasconset. In such a matter as that the Captain replied that he was its oyster. This frank expression from a bluff old sailor established the Captain in the confidence of the Government. Then the Government told the Captain that it was the Government who was seeking transportation. The Captain replied that he would as soon carry the Government as a Sunday school superintendent unless it had the itch, in which case it would have to go into quarantine at The Bank. The Government was still more deeply impressed with the candor and honesty of its newly formed acquaintance, and it made up its mind that he was the man to tie to in seeking to accomplish his mission. So the Government got over the tail board of the Swiftsure with its gripsack, took a seat, and soon the craft was slowly moving through The Town.

The Government proceeded to make inquiries about the matter in respect to which it had been deputed to the island, to wit, the violation of a statute by one Baxter, residing in Siasconset, by displaying upon a domicile situate within said village, a symbol or device whereon were

painted the words "POST OFFICE," and by said symbol or device, the said domicile was held out to the unwary, and was calculated to deceive them into the belief that said domicile was, and is a post office, established by and under the authority, and recognized by the United States of America, by the grace of God, free and independent, and that thereby divers good citizens might be induced to deposit letters, newspapers, merchandise and other mailable matter for transportation by and through the mails of the United States of America aforesaid, which function the said United States of America had, by statute in such cases made and provided, reserved unto itself!

It didn't take the Captain long to catch on to the situation and he declared the statement to be a base fabrication. He said he knew Baxter well; in fact, man and boy, they had been together on sea and shore for nearly three quarters of a century; that he and Baxter were inseparable, and he knew what he was talking about; that if Baxter's nose itched, he, in sympathy, involuntarily sneezed; whereas, if he had a boil in an uncomfortable position on his own person, Baxter never allowed himself to sit down, out of respect to his condition; and the idea that Baxter would condescend to the infamy of committing a crime so heinous as to put a shingle over his door, which, by implication, would hold him out as an officer of the United States Government was beyond belief! The earnestness with which the Captain made the asseveration was sufficient to satisfy the Government, and it stated as much. But the Captain said that the honor and good name of his friend Baxter were involved, and he insisted upon taking the Government to the village to let it see for itself. He did take it, but not to 'Sconset, for he sheered the Swiftsure off to port, to the little hamlet of Polpis, and there showed it every house and every shingle and not a suspicion of a

sign of a post office was to be seen. The Government left the island satisfied that an outrage had been perpetrated upon the character of a public spirited and law abiding citizen, and he so reported to his superior. Correspondence was renewed between the marshal and the District Attorney, followed by an exchange of notes between the District Attorney and the Post Office Department, all of which will be found classified and indexed in the archives at Washington. The matter was not heard of afterwards and the sign of the post office continued to stand untouched on the queer old house. And each day as he arrived with the pouch he tooted his horn, and resident and visitor alike were warned that soon the mail would be opened and distributed; and rather than anybody should be disappointed at not receiving a letter, the Captain would write one himself and collect the transinsular postage. If the letter didn't suit them, it was not his fault. He had done his best.

The Captain felt that if he was not a postmaster de jure, he was at least de facto, and as such, he had a keen appreciation of the responsibility that rested upon him in his unofficial employment. The inviolability and safety of the mails were a source of constant care and anxiety and he devised means to secure both. The pouch was a carpet bag of colossal proportions and uncertain antiquity. By means best known to himself, it had been made wind, water and fire proof. In the transit it was secured by a combination lock made of a piece of retired clothes line, and the secret of opening it was only known to the postmaster in Town, to the Captain, and his wife, and they never divulged the secret until about 1880, when the necessities of the mail traffic compelled them to confide it to Tucker from the Hub, who thenceforward became the volunteer aid in receiving and delivering the mass of mail matter

coming through the office, and he also acted as cashier in collecting local postage between The Bank and The Town, in which violation of the postal laws Mrs. Baxter was an abettor and the Captain himself no better. But as everybody was glad that somebody was bold enough to defy the law that the public convenience might be served, neither Tucker, nor Mrs. Baxter, nor the Captain were indicted, Tucker also took the contract for unraveling the intricacies of the Captain's accounts as express messenger and common carrier. They were kept in a complex method peculiar to the Captain. It was a combination of single entry in his head, double entry on a scrap of paper lying loose in his pocket and quite as often no entry at all, and between the three it was difficult to tell whether the Captain was rushing into the vortex of bankruptcy or was amassing thousands of dollars each season. But it was never seriously stated that he was getting rich, and that bankruptcy was not assured each year is probably due to the vigilance of Tucker as a successful collector, in spite of the Captain's carelessness, and his skill as an accountant and financial expert. What Tucker did was done on the principles of long, and broad, and deep good nature. His labors like those of the quaker preacher were labors of love, which after all, give one more pleasure than services that are paid for.

The growth of the place in importance had already suggested making it a post village, and some years ago The Bank did have a premonitory symptom of what was to come. A post office was actually established and the Captain's daughter was appointed postmaster. I say postmaster; for there is no such office as postmistress. Her salary was fixed at twelve dollars a year! To the Captain was given the contract for carrying the mails for which he was rewarded by the United States of America in the munificent

compensation of eight dollars for every year of service! But it didn't last long. The postmaster found that she was getting rich too fast. As for the Captain, he was afraid that he would be tempted by the accumulated profits of his contract, to rush into Wall Street and speculate in stocks and perhaps get into the papers as a star route swindler. He had read somewhere, an authoritative statement in respect to the difficulty of traveling through the eye of a needle with a camel, as illustrating the chances of the rich man entering the kingdom of heaven. He didn't mean to get left if he could help it. He wrote to the Post Office Department that he would rather carry females than mails for the same money, and if it was all the same to the Government he preferred to throw up the contract. As for the postmaster, she stopped short in her mad career of money making in office, and about that time she was seized with a severe fit of matrimony which caused her to give up official honors and retire into private life.

Then things went on in the old way again until, one day, the Postmaster General came to The Bank for rest and pleasure. But he was followed by voluminous correspondence, and in less than three days his pocket suggested and his eye took in the situation. His moral sensibilities were shocked to find that the stamped envelopes prepared for official letters didn't hold good beyond the limit of the post office at Nantucket. Between The Town and 'Sconset, Baxter was an independent post office department to which visitors official and unofficial must pay tribute; and the Postmaster General found this to be a heavy draft upon his private resources. Things looked serious. He had only brought money enough to pay his board and washing and to quench the thirst of the official stomach when its owner should go a fishing. His private exchequer was being so rapidly depleted for local postage that he found he must

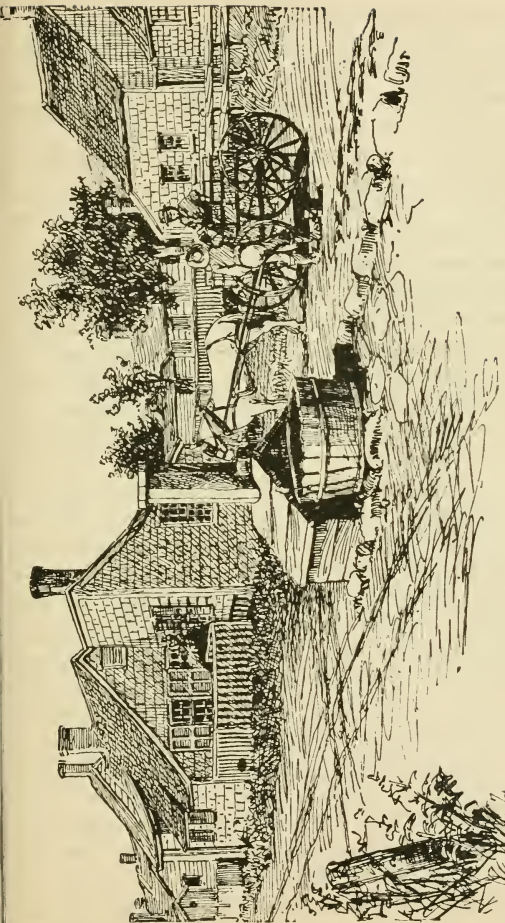


establish a post office or leave the island broke. So a movement was at once set on foot to extend the postal arrangements to The Bank. Captain Baxter was offered the postmastership, but he declined. Indoor life and official dignity, he said, were not suited to his complexion. The Postmaster General kept shady to avoid being run down with applications for the appointment, but he sent out skirmishers to find a suitable man for the office. To his bewilderment nobody wanted it. The ideal republic was at last found, wherein the office sought the man and not the man the office. But the man was not to be had.

Then, one lady after another, was importuned to take the position but neither prospective honors nor emoluments were any inducement to assume the burden of official responsibility. None on The Bank were born great, nor had they achieved greatness, and yet all were averse to having greatness thrust upon them. Argument and entreaty were alike unavailing. Such a phenomenon had never been heard of and much less seen within federal jurisdiction. The Postmaster General started from The Bank just as he had broken his last ten dollar bill and returned to Washington. A special Cabinet meeting was called, but neither President, nor minister would believe the story. What? a post office and nobody willing to act as postmaster? Great Scott! The statement was incredible! To see is to believe; and when letters came on to the department announcing the unsuccessful efforts which had been made to get a person to take the office they had to own that what they had been told was true.

At last the batteries of argument and persuasion were brought to bear upon Mrs. Almy, a refined and educated lady residing on The Bank. She too, was resolute in her refusal. But after a few hours of bombardment she showed signs of weakening. The advantage was followed





Ye Ancient Pump & ye Post Office

up. Relays of summer residents, one after another, visited and labored with her like saints bent upon the conversion of an obdurate sinner at a high pressure revival. At last, after a night past in solemn self communion, she concluded to take the position, very much on the principle of the girl who married the man to get rid of him. In a few days she was clothed with official honors and thenceforward the head of her name and its tail were identical, for in official correspondence she signed herself P. M. Almy, P. M.

The Captain took the contract of carrying the mails upon his making a promise that he would bear his honors meekly and stand up and draw his salary each and every month without flinching. The sign board which, in defiance of the law, had been for years over his door was taken down and removed to another one, where the Government of the United States is represented in the person of the postmaster.

As for Tucker of Boston, he had time to rest—the first he had in three years. He subsided into the privacy of his little house, receiving the thanks of the living in 'Sconset and with a memory to be cherished by generations unborn for the sacrifices he made and the care he had taken that the post office be not strangled before its birth.

So the Captain followed the road between The Bank and The Town carrying the mails and receiving and landing passengers at the wharf, relieved of all cares except that of courier. He had become so well known that strangers looked for his genial face when they came upon the island, and from the moment a visitor was seated in the Swiftsure he would wait to see where the lightning of his fun would strike. His friends had come to be counted by hundreds instead of scores as in bygone years.

And so the routine of his employment continued until the year of grace, 1884, when the whistle of the locomotive on

The Bank announced that the little railway was completed from The Town, and later in the day, visitors to the number of a thousand came up on the cars to attend the celebration of the event. Never had such a gathering been in 'Sconset before. Old people who had hoped they might live to ride on the first train of cars had their wishes gratified. In a day the Lightning Express, which for twenty years had been run by the old veteran as a paying enterprise was snuffed out. The railway company cut rates by half. The Captain dropped his to meet the competition. Still the tired strangers preferred quick steam to slow lightning. Then the Captain announced a further reduction to half the rates charged by rail. It was of no use. He chartered the town crier to announce on the arrival of the boat that the Swiftsure would take passengers for nothing and give them "a boiled dinner" at Scudder's at the wharf before starting, or at the Ocean View House at the end of the trip. But the passengers preferred the cars. As a last resort he promised never to tell a yarn to a passenger who should patronize him. Several took him at his word and started for The Bank, But he found it impossible to change his habits, and before they had arrived at Madequeecham valley he had stuffed them full. He didn't repeat the effort. It was apparent to him that he had lost his grip on the passenger traffic to and from The Bank.

"Did the old man die?" I almost hear the reader ask. Not much. He has more lives than a cat. He owned up that he was beaten and he surrendered in the best of humor. But there was all the rest of the island open to the navigation of his craft, and in which railway competition need not be feared in his day. From Siasconset to Sankaty Head, Sesachacha, Quidnet, Squam, and Wauwinet, on the north, over Saul's Hills to Polpis on the northwest, were

drives over moorlands covered with heath and redolent with the perfume of wild flowers which find a genial home on the soil. From the light house on Sankaty Head, the vision can span forty miles to seaward and watch the fleets of vessels passing and repassing along the coast. Between the placid waters of Sesachacha pond and the ocean, a narrow sand beach, scarce a hundred feet in width, intervenes, and over which, in heavy gales, the brine is often dashed into the fresh water of the pond. The little hamlets on the road to the northward were as large as Siasconset was a hundred years ago, but many houses were taken down, and removed to be put up again on The Bank to swell the importance of the little fishermen's village which, in time, was to become a popular seaside resort, and the terminal point of a pocket railway. On the higher points of the island, on the jaunt over the moors, the eye can take in the inner harbor with little yachts and row boats moving over its surface, and the attenuated peninsula of Coatue, which divides it from the sea. To the extreme north the vision follows the line of another peninsula, Coskata, with Great Point Light at its head. Away from the little hamlets, scarce a house is to be seen in a drive extending over miles. Of trees there are none, save now and then, a stunted growth is found making an unequal struggle for existence. The absence of dwellings causes no sense of loneliness, nor does the lack of trees suggest a discomfort. The loveliness of the view enchants the thoughts, and the cool ocean breezes wafted upon the body, though one is clothed in woollens, ensures comfort even under the sun at meridian. Homeward bound, late in the afternoon of a July or August day, the temperature is sometimes lowered until an overcoat or heavy wrap, if taken, are found not to be uncomfortable. And when, at last, the little cottage is reached after a day of delights;

heavy eyelids impel the visitor to his bed upon which he is lulled to sleep by the murmur of the breakers.

To give visitors such experiences the old master mariner withdrew his craft from the regular traffic in which for nearly a quarter of a century it had been engaged.

Then, too, he finds himself in demand in The Town. Visitors need him as a local guide, even more than they required his services for cross island traffic. So when occasion calls, he flings his pennant to the breeze on his junior craft, the "Little Swiftsure," and when transporting passengers about The Town, he entertaineth them with marvelous tales. The streets he knoweth as well as the town crier or the directory man. He explaineth the causes of the gloom and darkness on Candle street; he expatiateth on the absence of corn fields along the line of Coon street and the consequent scarcity of coons thereon; he introduceth them into the life and gayety which prevaieth on Coffin street; he exhibiteth to them the old habitations and landmarks which aboundeth on New street; he directeth attention to the many curious things which have brought Back street to the front; he telleth why it is that Plumb Lane is no longer straight up and down, and he regretteth that thirsty mortals can get nothing to drink on Water street not even Adam's ale; he pointeth to the palatial residences of the grinding monopolists on Mill street, and even showeth the mill wherein the aforesaid monopolists grind their grists; he pointeth out depressions in Whale street and he solemnly asseverateth that they were made by the flopping of the tail of a sperm whale which, having lost his reckoning, under a stress of weather, ran ashore in The Town and could not get to sea again. Indeed, this veracious volume could not contain half the wonderful stories with which he regaleth those who take a cruise with him in the "Swiftsure," big or little.

## STRANDING OF THE SWIFTSURE.

But on her first voyage to new ports the Swiftsure met with disaster. She left port at The Bank about 10 o'clock in the morning with a full passenger list and crew, bound for Wauwinet, and she reached her moorings without mishap, though two or three times she touched a sand spit, the shifting character of which between Sesachacha and Quidnet make the navigation awkward to an old sailor, and even dangerous to those not familiar with the waters. The weather was delightful, and the ride in every way enjoyable. In the afternoon the Captain started on his return trip. After a little detention the Swiftsure safely passed the bar of the Wauwinet House and said "good by" to the bar keeper. It was high tide and there was every indication of a pleasant voyage. When abreast of Squam, she encountered a strong head wind, but with the coal bunkers, under the front seat, full, the Captain had no doubt of reaching his anchorage at 'Sconset by nightfall. During the dog watch he sighted the weather-cock at Eat Fire Spring, three points off the starboard bow, when he hauled to the westward and got a range on Sankaty Light, to pass through the slew to the eastward of Saul's Hills. The Captain had not sailed in these waters for nearly half



a century, and in that time the channel had shifted considerably and he found it difficult to steer clear of the shoals which had made out at various points. He carefully scanned the chart and found his bearings were right, and he had a lookout on the knightheads to catch the first glimpse of shoal water. While pursuing this course he was shut in by a heavy fog that came up from the southwest. He lost his range and was compelled to steer by compass. Frequent soundings were taken as an additional precaution. The Captain had not calculated the influence of the tides in affecting his course. It was then setting strong to the eastward, and while he was cautiously steaming about four knots an hour, the current, unknown to him, had drifted his vessel off her course and, without a moments warning, she struck on Starbuck shoal. In an instant, the linch-pin of the wheel on the starboard quarter broke, and unable to get steerage way, the vessel was pounding heavily against the sand. The boatswain piped all hands on deck, and every man was at his station ready for any emergency that might arise. There was dismay among the passengers, and a panic would have resulted but for the coolness of the veteran commander which inspired them with confidence; for on his assurance that there was no immediate danger their fears were quieted. Soon the fog lifted, and then the Captain unlashed the starboard horse from the davits, put on a boat's crew and pulled for Polpis harbor for assistance, leaving the vessel in charge of his dog Jack, with the stewardess second in command. During his absence the sea broke heavily upon the vessel's port and she was gradually careening over to starboard when the stewardess, with great presence of mind, with a piece of rope yarn taken from her spanker gear (I mean the vessel's, of course) tied a section of her petticoat to the whip stock and raised it as a signal of

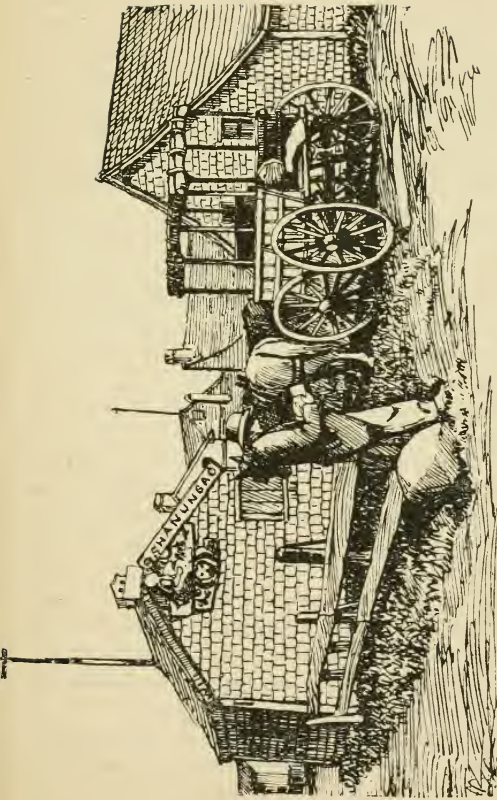


distress. This was sighted by the underwriter's agent who was on the "walk" of his pig pen with a telescope; and he at once dispatched two island tugs up the road to the scene of disaster. They met Captain Baxter and took him on board and went to the rescue of the Swiftsure. On arriving he found that the crew had broken open the locker, taken out a bottle of rum, which the Captain carried for medicinal purposes, and nothing else, and were having high jinks, while the passengers were wild with apprehension. But the return of the Captain restored order, and discipline was at once enforced. Hawsers were carried out to the tugs and soon the vessel was hauled off the shoal and was towed to her anchorage by the Captain's stable which she reached about 9 o'clock at night.

The coolness and intrepidity of the old mariner in this trying emergency, which was one of the most exciting episodes of his eventful career, are spoken of by the passengers in terms of the highest praise. A meeting was at once called and a resolution adopted appointing a committee to purchase a new trumpet for presentation to him whenever he should furnish the money to get it.

This is the only mishap that has occurred to the Swiftsure in attempting to sail in new waters. Every shoal, and rip, and slew, is now familiar to him, and with landmarks, and buoys, and compass, and chronometer to aid him, neither fogs, nor icebergs, nor tides, deter him from making his course by night or day whenever the traffic demands it.

And yet the channels are many and every one devious. To the stranger they are bewildering. As already described, between 'Sconset and The Town, the main highway is made up of deep ruts worn by the wheels of passing wagons and another, intervening, by the feet of horses. In



Ye swyft=stre ott onchyr<sup>i</sup>nn ye H<sup>o</sup>e H<sup>o</sup>e H<sup>o</sup>e

number they are sufficient to admit of a dozen teams passing abreast. The highway is perhaps a hundred feet wide, its limits being marked by rows of diminutive pines on the north and south, planted by a public spirited citizen 25 years ago, in the hope that they would restock the island with timber, of which it had been denuded for over a century, to furnish fuel and for ship building. Take any line of ruts and in five minutes the traveller will wish he had taken another. Once in it, it may be a half mile before he will have an opportunity to get out, and then, if he changes, he will be sorry. He may attempt to cross into the first over the ridges of earth and heath. The heavy jolts are followed by screams of the women and ejaculations of the men, oftentimes more emphatic than polite. All sigh for a change even to a western corduroy road, as a luxury in comparison. Whoever has tried the experiment never makes the second attempt. It

“Makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others we know not of.”

Still that road has one merit. Start from Siasconset, the traveller, without guidance, will be sure to arrive in Town. Liver, and spleen, and stomach, may be rudely jostled but he cannot go astray. If he has a momentary doubt his horse has none.

But leaving the main thoroughfare, the stranger is translated into a region of almost perpetual doubt. For a short distance the road may be fenced. But the time comes, and that very shortly, when fences cease and he finds himself pursuing a beaten way through an open country. Still he is serene, although there is not a house or human being in sight. But when he comes to the forks of a road, or to a cross-road, he has slight misgivings. Or, if the road takes him to a gate, the feeling is intensified. Doubts come on quick and fast. The gate suggests

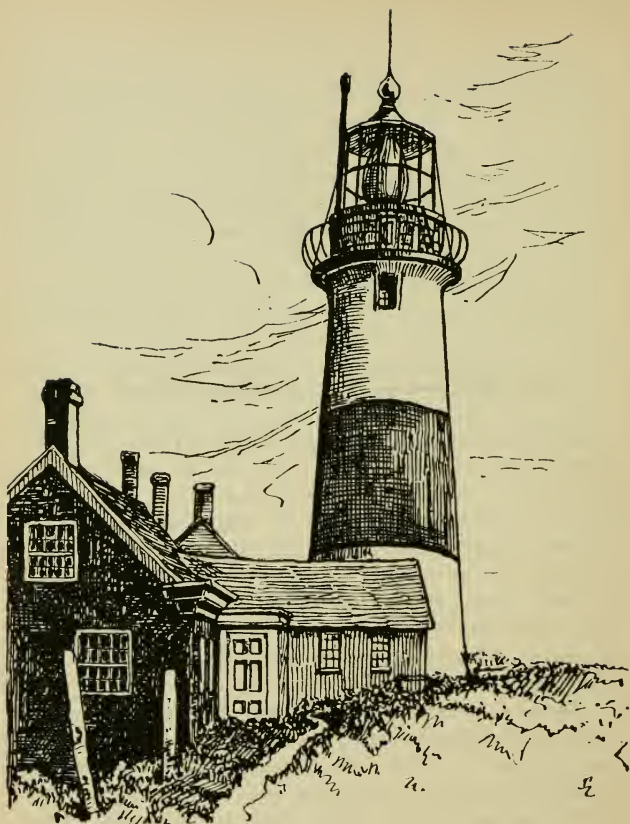
that all this time he has been driving upon private property and has been a trespasser without knowing it. Yet he musters up courage to open the gate and pass through. Very soon he sees in the distance another gate which, unless opened, will bar his further progress. Then he is satisfied that he is within somebody's field and is a trespasser, and the horrible thought crosses his mind that he has lost his way beside. In a moment the injured owner may appear and forcibly eject him from the premises. As he goes along he sees signs nailed on the fence boards on which is painted "No shooting allowed in this pasture." He finds comfort in the statement. If there is no shooting, he need have no fears of a visitation of a bullet or bird shot in his person. But it occurs to him that such an interpretation of the words may not be what is intended. It may mean that sportsmen are not allowed to shoot birds on the land designated. This confirms him in the idea that he is on private property and it may be that the owner is secreted in some bush and watching him, under the belief that he is on a poaching expedition. At any rate, he, a stranger, is rendering himself liable for intruding upon others lands. But he passes the second gate in the hope that he will get upon the public road undiscovered. Thunder and lightning! He runs on a third gate. He pulls through that. Next he is confused by coming to the fork of a road, and either tine bears equal evidence of being a traveled way. Doubt is piled upon doubt. Perhaps the owner of the horse, after starting him aright, gave the direction to let the animal take his own way and that he would be sure to reach the place he wished. But the stop he has made, and the hesitation he has shown, seem to have aroused doubts in the mind of the horse as well. And when he finally concludes to rely upon the instinct of the animal, the instinct seems to have resolved itself into

a minus quantity. At any rate, the horse, perversely or otherwise, makes no choice. In the exigency the stranger chooses one or the other road and regards it as about an equal chance whether he is right or wrong. The course of the road is itself bewildering. Then comes a turn to the left or right, but with the road on which he is, continued in direct line. What was uncertainty now becomes almost distraction. A look forward shows an opening in a fence which seems to invite him further. Just then he sees another team beyond, and that fact satisfies him that he is on the right road. He passes through the opening only to meet the other team turning around and coming back. Each party looks at the other inquiringly. A consultation discloses the fact that they are a couple of vehicular babes in the woods. Each wants to go to the same place and each tells the other all he doesn't know about the way. The stranger turns his wagon, comes out of the opening followed by the other, pursues his course back to the turn of the road he had discarded, to follow the straight course and sheers off in the other direction. Then he comes to a place where he has the choice of crossing a little rickety bridge made of rough and decayed planks or pulling through a stream of uncertain depth which carries off the dark waters of a peat swamp. The ruts of wagon wheels show that the stream is passed by vehicles. The bridge is less assuring. The one may be suggestive of discomfort arising from the depth of the water. The other is manifestly extra-hazardous. The horse solves the doubt by pulling forward through the stream with the water reaching above the axles. The shrieks of the ladies at such a time do not have a tendency to establish equanimity of mind and temper. These experiences may be repeated on the route, but inevitably one reaches the point he is after, simultaneously, or within a few minutes after or

before the other team which had got adrift and had chosen still another road. For it is an extraordinary fact that, all a person has to do in traversing Nantucket island is to keep his bearings right and he will be sure to land where he wants. Nantucket town, Siasconset, and Wauwinet are the points of a right angled triangle. Midway on the hypotenuse, between The Town and Wauwinet, is Polpis. Start from either point in the right direction and keep one's bearing with reference to the dome of the Unitarian Church or Sankaty Lighthouse, either of which can be seen for miles, and any one of a half a dozen turns from the road will carry him to his destination.

But for peace of mind it is better that the visitor confide himself to an old navigator, of whom Captain Baxter is chiefest and loveliest among ten thousand.





Ye Light House on Safety Head



## AN ANCIENT DOCUMENT.

One day it was rumored that a discovery of great archeological importance had been made on The Bank which probably had reference to, and would throw light upon events connected with the early history of the island. As the particulars became known, the village was excited and, after a time, was convulsed from center to circumference. The inhabitants were arrayed in hostile factions, the one-side claiming that it was of inestimable value in interpreting early traditions handed down from past generations, while the other scouted the idea that it had any historic significance, and boldly asserted that the suggestion of its antiquity was the merest figment of the imagination, if it was not founded in fraud and forgery. Even the visitors were driven into the controversy and they discussed the merits of the alleged discovery in heated words. The absorbing question of whether the railroad cars would relegate horses and box wagons into things of the past was forgotten in the rankling disputes that were heard in respect to the authenticity of the document—for such was the find—the origin of which was veiled in mystery.

One day Captain Baxter was rummaging through the garret of his house situated near the pump, in which the majesty of the Government is represented by Mrs. Almy the postmaster. He found an old chest, the existence of which he had not previously known. He removed it to his dwelling to examine its contents, Besides odds and ends of fishing tackle, many scraps of paper containing written words and figures in which pounds, shillings, and pence appeared, some pieces of old leather, a few printed books, the remains of an old fashioned lantern with a piece of candle in its socket, and some other matters of no importance, there was an aged stained document made up of several sheets of paper attached together, and the appearance of which attracted the Captain's attention. It was covered with what seemed to be written characters, which he tried to decipher. Not succeeding with one pair of spectacles he put on two. But with these optical auxiliaries he could only gather that it was a paper written evidently with painstaking care, the letters of which were of a form long since obsolete and interesting only to antiquarians and book worms whose earthly paradise is in the midst of the cobwebs of forgotten literature. The Captain could not make head or tail of the paper, though heads and tails profusely ornamented the letters, as in the originals of Magna Charta and other authentic ancient documents. After two days of personal investigation he called in aid another veteran mariner, and he with enthusiasm undertook an examination. He boxed the compass in eyeing it; he got its avoirdupois on a pair of counter scales; he took an observation with quadrant and sextant and calculated its latitude and longitude to the fraction of a hair; and yet he was bothered to find its position on the chart. Then another old Captain was brought into consultation who tried to fix its position by dead reckoning and he didn't

succeed any better. As old sailors could not seem to wrestle with the problem they took a landsman into their counsel, in the hope that he might make headway in the interpretation of the document. He took its dimensions; tested it by rule and compass, and by square and bevel. He looked wise as if he had penetrated the boundaries of the mystery and had got a grip on its true inwardness. But as he said nothing, a satisfactory explanation at his hands didn't seem very promising. Then another citizen tackled it with plumb-bob and level and afterwards tested the pigments with which it was written by chemicals specially imported from The Town, and he was able to say with confidence, that it was an ancient document. But it was not until the resident oracle of The Bank brought it under his vision through his prehistoric, three story and basement telescope, that they were able, here and there, to dig out a sentence, when all were confirmed in the belief that Captain Baxter had struck a hundred barrel literary whale. Little by little, as each in turn, and then by pairs, and then by threes looked closely and critically at the paper, the words were disentangled from the old fashioned spelling and antique letters, until they reached a point where the writing wholly faded out, and the further effort to decipher had to cease until experts could examine the paper and apply agents by which they might be able to restore the faded letters to the surface. But the document so far as it was legible, when translated into plain Saxon English, and in the current spelling of our generation, is as follows:

#### CHAPTER I.

1. It was given unto Philetus the scribe to write these things.

2. Wherefore hath he put them down in truth, and hath written naught in anger.

3. It came to pass in those days that there came to the tent of Thomas, who was likewise called Maigh Sea, a man who was sought for by those who were in authority.

4. Forasmuch as the man believed not in the manner of worship which the elders of the congregation had ordained ; for they were Pharisees in their day and generation.

5. And because he believed not in their manner of worship, the elders counseled together and said that such as he should be brought before the magistrates, there to be tried for their unbelief.

6. And because Thomas, when a great tempest came over the land had given shelter unto the stranger whom elders were seeking, that they might punish him for his unbelief, he was brought before the magistrates, who adjudged that he forfeit unto them in authority a hundred shekels of silver.

7. Whereat Thomas was sorely grieved.

8. For he was a just man and walked in the paths of righteousness, albeit the elders deciated him, because he had given shelter unto the stranger, to be a sinner and not worthy to be in the congregation.

9. And straightway the stranger, was taken before the magistrates.

10. And it was seen that his outer garment was shaped like unto the belly of a fish, and that the hat which he wore upon his head was in width near half an ell, from the port to the starboard side thereof.

11. And furthermore that he spake not in words like the Pharisees and those in authority, but in the words of the common people.

12. Wherefore the magistrates saw that he was not of the congregation.

13. And because he worshiped not in the manner of the Pharisees he straightway was taken out and hanged.

14. For the elders had said it was not meet that one who worshiped not as did the Pharisees should live.

15. And Thomas took counsel with his brethren and they said we will no longer tarry in a land where we cannot do kindness unto the stranger who cometh unto our gates and who may need food and raiment, and may likewise want shelter from the rain, and the snow, and the storm, and the tempest and the blizzard.

16. But we will seek rather a home among the heathen on an island in the sea and there pitch our tents away from men who would seek to persecute us that we do good to our fellow men.

## CHAPTER II.

1. So Thomas, who was likewise called Maigh Sea, together with a kinsman, Eduardus, who was likewise called Stahr Bukke, betook themselves unto a little ship that they might go unto the island in the sea where they could find among the heathen the compassion they had not found among the people with whom they dwelt.

2. And they were borne by the winds upon the billows far from the land.

3. And great were their sufferings in their pilgrimage upon the waters to seek the island in the sea whereon the elders and the magistrates should not make them afraid.

4. For the waves did toss the ship in divers ways and they were made sick unto death and they did cast up the food they had eaten into the waters.

5. (Whereat, the fishes that were in the sea did greatly marvel, for they tumbled not to the racket.)

6. So Thomas and his kinsman Eduardus did question one with the other whether it were not better they had staid upon the land, even though they suffered sorely at the hands of the elders and the magistrates.

7. But they said we will go on until we reach the land we seek, for should we not, we should be mocked by our kinsfolk on our return.

8. And great was the result thereof to the generations of men which were to come.

9. They reached the island in the sea; and they sought and held counsel with the chief men among the heathen; who told them that they might abide thereon.

10 Whereat Thomas, and his kinsman Eduardus, were greatly rejoiced, and they said unto one another, now will we have the bulge on the heathen even as the elders and magistrates did have the bulge on us in the land in which we have dwelt.

### CHAPTER III.

1. And when they returned unto their brethren and told them of what they had done their hearts were made exceeding glad.

2. So they gathered their families and their household goods together and went forth and pitched their tents upon the island in the sea.

3. And they were just men and sought not to take what was not their own; so they did whack up their shekels among themselves that they might buy the lands whereof the heathen were possessed.

4. And they said unto the heathen, that we may dwell among you without strife and bitterness, it is meet that we buy from you the lands whereon you live.

5. And the heathen were simple and without guile and they saw not the Ethiopian that was hidden in the fence.

6. For they understood not the thrift of him who, in meek and lowly spirit, profiteth in every trade.

7. So they sold unto the strangers their land who paid unto them therefor, one score and six shekels of gold.

8. Albeit the sum was like unto the conscience of him who hawketh a new book, and by wiles enticeth the patriarch, and his wives, and his concubines, and his sons, and his daughters, and his man servants, and his maid servants, and the stranger within the gates to buy thereof.

9. For they werethrifty in their day and generation.

10. And whether in buying from the heathen their lands, or in selling unto them cloth for their raiment, or corn for their food, or rum with which to gladden their hearts, or in swapping with them jack-knives 'or fishing hooks, they did greatly enrich themselves and they did make merry thereat.

11. But the heathen were simple in their minds and they saw not wherein the laugh did come.

At this point the manuscript became illegible.

The authenticity of the paper formed a theme of discussion during the entire season. If it was a veritable ancient document, it was believed that it would throw light upon disputed points in the early history of Nantucket. But there were croakers who denied its antiquity and sought to depreciate its value. It was furtively whispered that anybody who would pass off the Town Poor House on unsuspecting strangers as the local home of the Italian opera; who would dedicate the mile stones on the main road as marking the sepulchers of departed aboriginal chieftians; who would induce confiding visitors to go to Phillips run and lave their feet in its dark waters under the representation that it possessed extraordinary virtues for curing corns and eradicating bunions; who, upon the spur of the moment, would send thirsty and uninitiated visitors to the big hotel on Brant Point, under the false representation that it was a lager beer brewery and where only they could get the inspiring liquid fresh tapped from the wood; who would give an amateur natural-



ist a strip of broad leaf kelp with the solemn assurance that it was the skin of a mammoth eel found only on Nantucket shoals; who would induce passengers who intrusted themselves to his guidance to buy accident policies before starting on their journey, because of the dangers which would beset them in crossing the island; and who gave them free passes to the 'Seonset Museum and to the Light House, for which he received their grateful thanks; there were those, I repeat, who said that a man who would do any and all these things would not hesitate to foist a paper of more than doubtful authenticity upon a patient and long suffering public; and as he had locked up the document in his safe, and refused to show it to anyone but his own friends, they claimed that their suspicions were justified.

But the friends of the Captain, with an abiding faith in his integrity, stood by him during the entire controversy. They would not for a moment believe that a man of his confiding, gentle nature would concoct or even abet a fraud so gigantic that, compared with it, highway robbery would sink to the level of trespass, and grand larceny have no higher dignity in the calendar of wrongs than an unpaid book account. Time, they said, would clear up all doubts, and the document itself would be left by the old mariner in trust to the Atheneum Library and would be eagerly sought by writers in search of historic truth and by scientists for its value as an archeological treasure.

At the close of the season the acerbity of feeling resulting from the discovery had largely diminished, and the winter's winds chilled the passions it had aroused. Now, only the memory of the dissensions exists, and the Captain occasionally produces the paper for the inspection of his friends, and with a wicked wink of his weather eye, wonders how anybody could have doubted its genuineness.

## THE PUMP CELEBRATION.

The air of Nantucket induces laziness. The active business man finds his weight increased to two tons within a week after he has reached The Bank at 'Seonset, and that nothing less powerful than a derrick can lift him off. Rest is the objective point of almost all who visit the island for the summer, and it becomes the ordinary condition of every one on his arrival. It can be had in any form; at wholesaie or retail; by weight or measure; in solid chunks or in molecules; fresh caught or in hermetically sealed packages; liquid to be taken without being shaken or solid without being dissolved. The human organism, mental or physical, can rest in seven living and sleep in five dead languages. I have known men whose brains and muscles could not resist doing active duty 16 hours out of 24 at home, who, within a week after their arrival at Siasconset, could loaf at the mark and hit it 17 times out of a possible 20. They need not have missed the other three if they had not been too sleepy to take aim. The visitor rises lazy in the morning, rests during the day, and

lazily retires to his bed to sleep, with mind too lazy to dream.

Such being the ordinary personal experience on The Bank, the demand for amusements is reduced to a minimum. In the special sense in which the word is used, there is scarce any. Of course, there is social intercourse and that of the most pleasant character. Peripatetic quartettes, musical artists, and readers, who combine profit with pleasure in visiting watering places, find the apathy of the people distressing. There is indifference even to artists of rare merit. It is not that, elsewhere, they do not take interest in such matters, for they are intellectual, refined and cultivated in their tastes. But it is not for such things they come to the seaside.

Still, if an entertainment, local in its origin and purpose is proposed, even if it is an almost impromptu affair, it is sure to be well attended and financially successful. The chapel debt was nearly all paid by the proceeds of concerts organized among visitors. On such occasions the ladies take hold in earnest. They skirmish among visitors for performers. They send out drummers to sell tickets and advertise the event according to the usage of the The Bank, that is, by tacking a notice on the village pump. That antiquated log, not only supplies water but also the place of local newspaper for announcing facts which parties generally want known. If anybody has lost anything, or has found anything; if there is to be preaching in the chapel, or base ball in the field; a "reading" in the parlor of the hotel for entertainment of visitors, or a hop in the dining room for the young people to join in and the old people to look on at, a written announcement of the fact is put on the pump and thus the general alarm is sounded. Those who are interested in the event repair to the rendezvous. Timid bachelors and available widowers have

time to betake themselves to places of refuge.

Sometimes the most ordinary events are made the excuse for a pretentious celebration in which the forms of a great occasion are gone through. The old pump on the main street had been for years out of repair. A visitor, at his own suggestion, undertook the duty of putting it in order. Of course, it was Tucker from the Hub. The act was so startling that his friends thought it deserving of special recognition. A lady on The Bank quietly arranged a celebration of the event. On the day fixed, the pump was decorated with wreaths and festoons of flowers. A platform was erected and seats arranged upon it. Those not in the secret were inquiring what in thunder it all meant. At noon it was announced that a celebration of the repair of the old pump would be held at 3 o'clock. The whole village turned out. An eminent soldier who had been selected to preside, opened the proceedings with a most felicitous speech. A lady, now the minister of a church in New Haven, read an original poem. A visiting journalist was the orator of the day. Tucker himself was forced to appear, and blushinglly he made a speech. A literary gentleman in Town also furnished a poem. An eminent lawyer from a western state delivered the closing address, and the exercises were concluded by the singing of some high pressure, broad gauge verses constructed by a distinguished locomotive builder from western New York, in which the entire assemblage joined; and the local papers published the proceedings verbatim, for the delectation of their readers. The "oration" was as follows:

Mr. Burgomaster and fellow toilers on 'Sconset Bank: The history of every place shows that its affairs are now and then beset with a crisis, sometimes alarming in its portents. The bigger the place the bigger the crisis. In Persia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, in ancient times, there

were periods when things were lively. The most sinister prognostics were made by the "outs" unless they were allowed to swap places with the "ins"; and dire results were promised, if the "outs" were permitted to get their noses in the public crib. In modern times Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Rome, Madrid, and even London have their periodical throes. And as for New York, it is a perennial fountain of critical excitements. A year passed without an alarming crisis would cause its thoughtful citizens to suspect that the crack of doom was near. They would get their ascension robes from the washerwoman, put on the heavenly rigs and give an attentive ear to catch the first reverberation of the sound of Gabriel's trumpet. But Siasconset, has been singularly free from this feverish spirit. It is but once in a generation or so that a great crisis occurs in its affairs. Sometimes, however, the machinery of the universe does get out of kilter in a way to directly affect this particular piece of real estate within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Or, perhaps it is because the guardian angels of The Bank get into a miff among themselves, and thus are led to neglect their charge. Then the minds of the people from Captain John Pitman's back fence to Asa Jones' Pochick barn, and from the fish houses to George C. Macy's castle, for a time become unsettled. And so it happened in this year of grace.

Agos ago, in the tertiary period of Nantucket history, this venerable log was put into this identical hole, in this very ground on which we now do stand. The event was attended with imposing ceremonies. It was a great day for 'Sconset. Weeks before, the event was heralded by the town crier from the wharf to the wind mill, and his words were wafted across the Sound to the Vineyard and thence to the Cape and the main land; and a northeast gale

that was blowing at the time carried them over to Long Island. When the day came, on which the pump was put in the place, it was equal in the magnitude of the occasion to a Brooklyn Sunday school picnic, a Rhode Island clam bake, a Nantucket "squantum," a Concord School of Philosophy, an Ecclesiastical council, a New York political mass meeting, and an Irish wake all combined and boiled down into one. From Great Point and Wauwinet to Muskeget; from Madaqueecham to Masquetuck; from Madeket ditch and Wannecommett on the west, to Squam, and Quidnet, and Sesacacha, and Pohick on the east; and from Monomoy, and Shimmo, and Pokomo, and Shawkemo on the harbor, and from The Town, the beauty and the fashion, the wealth and the intelligence of the Island assembled to do honor to the occasion. The enthusiasm even reached the off-islanders. From the Vineyard came the solid citizens of Squibnocket with their equally solid wives. The magistrates of Chappaquanset were here in a body bearing their staves of office, and followed by a retinue of the most distinguished citizens of that paradisaical precinct. The men of Chappaquidick came prepared to resolutely wrestle with any amount of provender that the affluent citizens of Siasconset should have the hardihood to provide; and odds were freely offered that, in a given time, they would eat against quantity and with a given quantity they would eat against time, with no takers. From Long Island there came representative men from Syosett; and from Amagansett; and from Seatauket; and from Quogue; and from Patchogue; and from Aquebaug; and from Shinicock; and from Mattinicock; and from Ketehebonneck; and from Speonk. Then there were present from the Cape and the main land, in squads, companies and battalions, the public spirited citizens of Cataumet; of Quashnet; of Monomet; of Wenauumet; of Scussett; of Pocassett; of Cohassett; of Mono-



missett; of Neponsett; of Acushnett; of Onset; of Wybossett; of Mattapoissett; of Poponesett; of Narragansett; of Coonemosett; of Woonsockett; of Pawtucket; of Monohansett; and of Quamquisset; not to mention large delegations from Monomoscoy and Sippican.

It was a glorious day for this Bank and don't you forget it. Guns were fired from daybreak till nightfall. Every dory was decked with gay bunting from deck to main peak, and from bowsprit to spanker boom. Processions led by brass bands paraded the streets. And as for hospitality, ten try-kettles with a retinue of cooks were in use all day constructing chowder. And doughnuts were fired at the gathered multitudes and caught on the fly in their mouths, while cider flowed from the spigots of a hundred barrels until the gullet of the thirstiest "coof" was filled to repletion, and he devoutly thanked his stars that for once he had had enough.

And the pump. Well, it was a beauty as pumps go. It was critically surveyed by the admiring throng from all the points of the compass, and from the corner stone at the lowest depths of the encircling wall to the graceful capital which surmounted the log at its dizzy height, all pronounced it good.

Thus was the career of this water hoister auspiciously begun. Year after year, decade after decade, generation after generation, first as little boys and girls, then as blushing youths and maidens, next as strong and vigorous men and women, and lastly as feeble folk in declining years, did the people here work that pump handle up and down as lively as the average candidate shakes the hands of voters before election, and elevate to the surface for man and beast that limpid draught which, like Doctor Johnson's tea cheers but not inebriates. But men, and women, and people, and nations, and even planets, and perhaps suns



and stars have their careers of birth, of growth, of fulness, of decline and of death. And it could not be expected, in the natural order of events, that a 'Sconset pump, albeit-brought into existence under such brilliant surroundings and honored by being placed on the main street of the comfort capital of the coast, could last for ever, nor carry its buoyant powers of juvenescence into green old age. There came a time when its usefulness became impaired, First, there was a degeneration in its valvular tissues which betokened not only functional but possible organic disorder in a vital part. Next a lesion of the log was strongly suspected, which resident hydrostaticians located about midships, somewhere between the main hatch and the keelson. The result was that it required a concentration of mental determination, and then employment of largely increased elbow grease to lift to the surface the water needed for daily consumption in the pots and kettles of 'Sconset housewives. Then the nozzle became loose in its socket, and half the water raised for the pail miscarried and trickled down outside the pump log back into the well again. This was discouraging enough of itself. But at last matters grew so bad that it needed a strength equal to that of a donkey engine and a blue dog shark, combined, to hoist sufficient water to dilute the morning nip of New England rum with which the prudent 'Sconset citizen was wont, in those days, to fortify himself against rheumatism; and colic; and chilblains; and dropsy; and gripes; and peritonitis; and cerebro-spinal meningitis; and phthisis pulmonalis; and aurora borealis; and sui generis; and oscarus wildus aestheticitis, and the Lord only knows the many more dreadful ailments which even now delight to worry us poor mortals in our mournful travel through this vale of tears.

Then there came the decline in the whale fishery. As

all the misfortunes of Nantucket seemed to date from that event, and as it is certain that one after another the oil pumps went into disuse and ruin, it is not to be supposed that this already wind-broken water pump would not sympathize with the general demoralization and decay, and catching the infection of despair, feel that if Nantucket could not live by catching whales and trying out blubber there was no use for either pumps or water, and that it was time for it to go upon the retired list of superannuated water works. And so it happened that, one melancholy morning when Captain Robert Pitman came to the pump to fill a pail with water, he found that the handle had suffered a compound comminuted fracture and seemed permanently disabled.

Well, long years passed in which the old pump stood in the roadway, a rejected ruin, ever suggestive of the possibilities of affording life giving waters to the thirsty wayfarer, but nevertheless, a mockery, a delusion and a snare to him who sought them from it; for he who worked the handle found the pump as dry as a sermon on election and probation, exhumed from the musty polemics of fifty years ago.

It may seem strange that I, an off-islander, should be so familiar with these facts, not being contemporaneous with them nor having had time to search the archives of 'Sconset which Captain George W. Coffin has so carefully collated and classified in his library over at the grocery. As the next best thing I cut cross lots to that fountain of historic lore, Captain William Baxter, and from that high authority learned the facts which I have embodied in this erudite and truthful narrative, all of which he saw and part of which he was.

And now, to recur to the theme with which I began my remarks on this momentous occasion, to wit, the crisis.

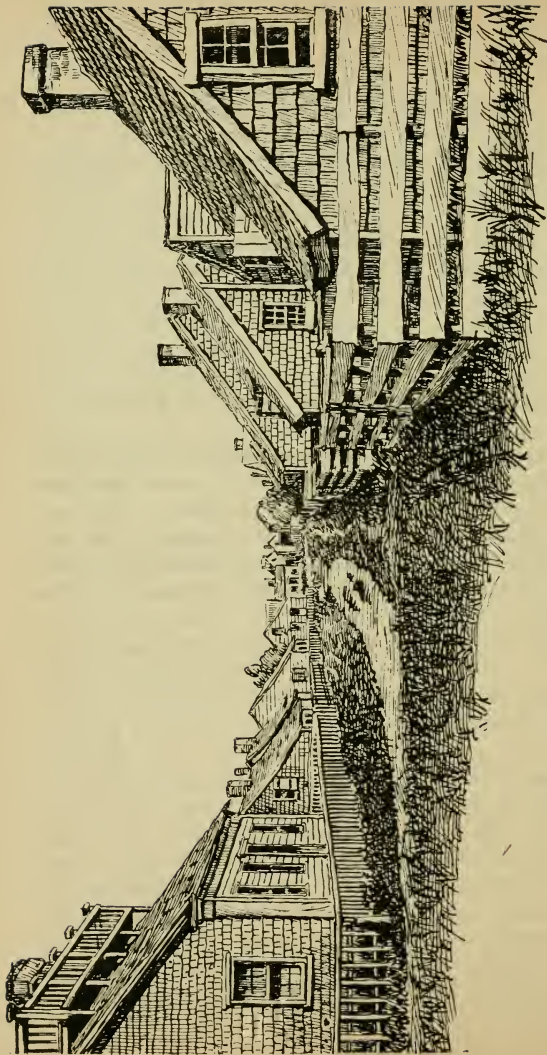
For this was the year in which 'Seonset was to pass through a crisis unequaled in its history. Let me briefly recount the particulars. We have had a season of unprecedented drought. With an unusual accession of visitors, the drafts upon the water supply were largely increased. One by one our cisterns gave out, and at last, we were compelled to fall back on the only remaining pump which had been dedicated to public use. The situation was startling. If the supply should there give out, the farmers could not water their cows before milking nor water the milk afterwards, that they might not cause disappointment among their customers, largely increased in numbers during the hight of the season. Thus a milk famine was imminent. Then water became scarce for laundry use and a clean linen famine seemed equally probable. A general distress was more likely to result from the fact that, at town meeting, the voters, by large majority, had decided to grant no licenses for this year on the island. As many were cut off from their usual distilled and fermented beverages, it caused a still greater draft on the pump for drinking purposes. Under these circumstances brave men took counsel of their fears. If there ever was a time when another pump was wanted it was during this year. For years I had said to myself "Why don't they fix that pump?" Thousands of residents and visitors every season had mentally propounded the same conundrum and nobody had guessed it. There it stood a perpetual sarcasm leveled at us for our inactivity and indifference. It only wanted a man with a homeopathic dose of pluck to solve the difficulty quicker than an itinerant preacher who has gone into the pulpit without his breakfast, can pronounce a benediction at the end of morning service. But when I get on this Island I could teach anybody how not to do it, in six easy lessons, if I were not so

lazy. In vindicating our race Sydney Smith said that mankind were naturally sympathetic and moved by impulses of benevolence and kindness; that, if A saw B suffering he was never easy in his mind until C had helped him out of his trouble. Here, I am animated by a similar feeling. If there is anything to be done, it is with serene satisfaction that I see somebody else do it. For years I saw the deplorable condition of this pump. But I waited for A to act. A held on for B. B was anxiously looking for C to move in the matter. C seemed to have an abiding faith that D would come forward like a little man and fix it. D didn't want to stand in the way of E gaining renown. And so it went on in the alphabet down, down, until it came to T, when lo! the modest man of action came forward and his maiden name was Tucker. He put his hands deep down into his trousers pocket, hired the necessary help, had the log lifted to the surface, the internal mechanism doctored, and the whole thing replaced; and before we sleepy souls were done rubbing our eyes in amazement at the temerity of the act, the pump, rejuvenated and more beautiful than ever, was doing effective service. Whereupon, we all threw up our caps in adulation, and in the classic language of the boy of the period we shouted "Bully for Tucker!"

Mark the result. The clerk of the weather, because he managed the rainfall, thought he had a corner on fresh water, and was preparing to squeeze the people on The Bank, when Tucker, by a strategical movement foiled him in his machinations, he concluded that it was of no use to hold back the rain any longer, and in 48 hours we were favored with copious showers. And with two wells in good condition, and cisterns replenished, we didn't care whether school kept or not.

And now for the moral to which this occasion points. It

is a melancholy reflection. but true, though we did not see it in time, that each person whom I see in this vast sea of upturned faces (I always did like that expression) might have occupied the honorable position that Tucker, from the Hub, does to-day, had he the sagacity, and pluck, and good sense, to have come forward in the emergency, and accomplished that which he so gracefully did; and he might have been the recipient of an ovation such as this, and heard his praises sounded in poetry and song, to say nothing about this extemporaneous oration that I sat up all last night to prepare, and which, by the inexorable logic of events, you couldn't escape hearing. But other crises will occur on The Bank as they have in the past, though not probably attended with such wide spread alarm. The general good will require that somebody, at sometime, do something; and when that time does come, any one who desires to gain renown, can get it by boldly coming forward and acting in the emergency and not wait for Tucker, from the Hub, to take all the tricks and honors.



Ye Oldest Street in Sycamore



## THE WORKING VISITOR.

To the general rule of acute laziness that attacks everybody on reaching Siasconset, and that in time becomes chronic, there is one notable exception. He is an eminent professor in a more eminent university. He is a profound investigator in the regions of physiology, comparative anatomy and zoology, and an author, as well. He would like to be lazy but he cannot. During the college year his duties as a teacher engross nearly all his attention, and he has not the requisite time to read or write. In the meantime new developements in science, double up on him, and new ideas are being evolved from his own mind. Hence he is compelled to devote his three months vacation passed on The Bank to catching up with current scientific literature and discharging his cargo of new thoughts on paper. He doesn't like it a bit, but it is inevitable. His mornings are devoted to work. At such times it is dangerous to approach him. When he has got a grip on an idea he holds on to it like a pup to a chicken bone. In such supreme moments to interrupt the sequence of thought, might cause it to miscarry, and the idea be strangled before his birth. But in the afternoon, he re-



venge himself for the enforced seclusion by battering the balls on the croquet ground, to the dismay of the wickets and the terror of the players. Before night he feels that he has got even with the fate that compels him to work, and he is ready for another go the next morning. Thus, study and croquet intermit until the end of the season when he is ready to bombard his class with projectiles filled with diastema, cusp, peronæus longus, hippocampus minor, auditory foramen, metatarsus and distal phalanges, and other technical explosives to shatter the intellects and carry devastation into the serried ranks of students.

For years his special subject of investigation was the cat. Pussy became to him his scientific soul's delight. With instruments of precision, he surveyed her superficial area from the initial point of her sensitive snout to the terminal hair of her elastic tail, and from the highest altitude of her spinal column in its extreme curvature, to her ultimate claws which never fail to inspire respect for the feline understanding. He explored her interior structure. Her osseous framework he knows from the coronal suture to the last ring in her caudal vertebrae. He dissected her muscular tissue until he learned all that a reasonable being in the present state of natural science can hope, and a great deal more than any layman would care to know about it. He descended into her thoracic cavity and accurately computed her lung power in comparison with that of the average boy while receiving the punitive application of the maternal slipper upon a sensitive portion of his person which, out of respect to the feelings of modest readers, I will not more particularly describe. He studied the intricate details of her abdominal and pelvic viscera and can tell from what particular section of intestinal tissue, when changed into a fiddle string, the sweetest melodies and most ravishing harmonies can be extracted, to contrast

favorably with her vocal gymnastics at nocturnal receptions given to friends of the thomas persuasion, and making night hideous from back fences, whence, a million of boot jacks, hurled in darkness have never, within the memory of man, dislodged a single, nor a married cat. He penetrated her cranial cavity and mapped out the cerebral convolutions with an accuracy which has exalted feline phrenology to the rank of a fixed science. Cats' brains he dissected vertically, laterally, and diagonally, and preserved them in glass jars filled with 90 per cent alcohol and hermetically sealed, so that the savants of future ages will be able thereby to learn from what the perfected cat of those days was evolved, and the chain will be complete, from protoplasm at the beginning of life to the grand cat-aclysm when the earth shall, in the natural course of planetary existence, burst into ultimate smithereens! Exactly when this little side-show will come off, has not been announced; but it is safe to say it will be at a time when Tuckernuck clams shall, for ages, have passed into fossil existence; when the "Sheep Question" on Nantucket shall not live even as a tradition in the mind of that oracular ancient, the oldest inhabitant; when the last 160 barrel whale shall have been caught in the Captain's Room and even the lucky fisherman himself shall have been gathered unto his fathers; when the nightmares of politics shall have ceased to disturb the sleep of the quiet citizen and the names of presidential candidates shall have become but pins' points in the world's history; and their careers, which, at the time of their candidacy were matters of lively interest shall have sunk into oblivion. Yes, and when the things shall come to pass, whereof this chapter is written, the readers of this veracious book and even its author will have passed in their checks and doubtless climbed the golden stairs. Be that as it may, for years,

'Sconset cathood has smelled danger in the air of The Bank since the Professor's arrival; and in going to or coming from the suburb of Pohick, the feline helm is put to port or starboard, as the case may be, lest the craft run on the shoals of his dissecting table and become unwilling contributors to the advancement of anatomical science.

But every cat did not suffer at his hands, even though convenient. For several years he brought with him one born with but three legs. It was appropriately called "Tripod," to which name it answered. Its movements were eccentric owing to its congenital defect and its first appearance was startling to visitors. Then he brought with him a young racoon as a pet. The next year a youthful fox was added to the list. Held by strong cords they accompanied the Professor, now and then, in his walks through the village. But near to his residence was Peleg Macy's barn and in and about it his stock of poultry. The fox often looked longingly thither, but his owner did not suspect his real thoughts. One day young reynard broke loose from his moorings and carried death and devastation into the hennery, and the Macy household passed a winter without eggs, and only obtained smells of fricassees when the odors were wafted from Captain Zacheus Swain's kitchen by north-east zephyrs. Whether that fox will pass another summer on The Bank is doubtful.

## GALL AND BITTERNESS.

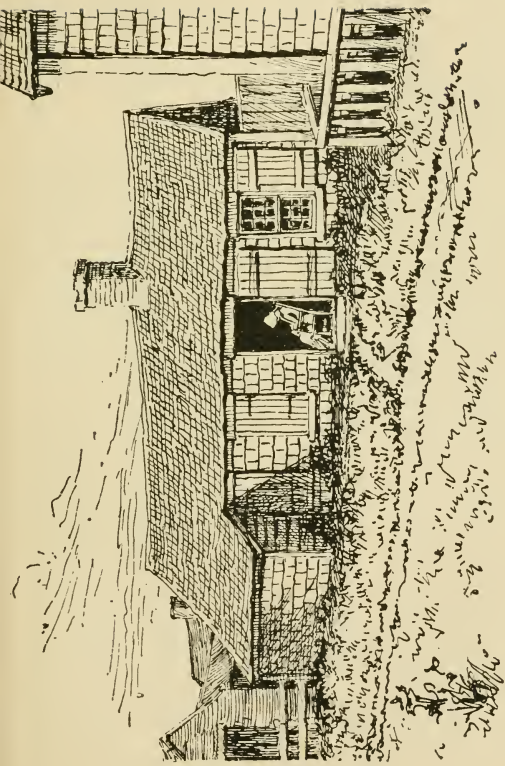
For fishing I care nothing. The gifts of Providence are dispensed differently. To some is given the genius for catching fish; to others the talent for eating them. I am an active member of the last named fraternity. I never fish nor cut bait. To this fact I attribute the possession of a reasonably fair reputation for veracity in circles where I am not well known. I shall never hazard it anywhere by going a fishing. For there is an intimate, though occult connection between fishing and lying about the result. Learned writers on ethics have not given the subject the consideration it deserves. Every liar is not a fisherman; the few fishermen who are not liars prove the general rule of piscatorial mendacity. I had always believed that, independent of an abstract love of lying, there was a pleasure experienced by men who went fishing, though I had never known it myself. Extended visits to 'Sconset bank have dispelled the illusion. I am reluctantly compelled to believe that the only inducement for men to go fishing is for the pleasure of lying about it afterwards.

This broad generalization does not apply to men who

gain their subsistence as toilers on the waters. With them it is business. Sentiment does not enter into the motives which lead them to follow the pursuit. It is pelf, not pleasure they seek. If the portents on a given day are against success, they do not venture further. Such a man who should lie about the size or weight of his catch would be a moral monstrosity.

But the average fisherman says he loves the sport. He will travel off ten miles to whip a trout stream; he will troll a lake under a broiling sun for pickerel or lake trout, knowing that his face will be brought to such a condition of disfigurement that, for a week, his most intimate friends will be in painful suspense while determining whether he is recovering from the small-pox or has been applying a blanket blister plaster to his face, for a toothache involving the entire effective force of incisors, canines and molars; he will sit alongside a stream on a projecting bank and hold a rod and line with one hand and fight mosquitoes or black flies with the other until nightfall; he will sit on a dock, or wharf for hours with a drop line in hand, and, at brief intervals, mournfully haul in and spit on his bait and throw it out again; he will anchor his small boat in waters which striped bass or sheepshead are supposed to favor with their presence and, in solemn silence, await the coming of a lonesome and unsuspecting fish, which he fancies will be tempted by the bait he has thrown to allure his hankering maw; he will do all these things, even in a drenching rain or a pinching cold; and in each case he may come home without a scale of his own raising. Yet, he will speak in rapturous praises of the delights felt in silent communion with nature; the poetic emotions inspired by gazing upon the lovely landscape or listening to the murmuring cadences of the rippling waters; the healthful effects on the mind and body resulting from rest for his

Спасаи Ханы Олоан, Хуи Хоа



brain and breathing of the pure air free from the noisome exhalations of urban surroundings; to say nothing of the wild ecstasy he feels when the finny victim strikes the hook and the excitement he experiences in the struggle that ensues, when drawing him from his native element; and all that sort of stuff which the generality of fishermen will dose you with in a score of ways.

But it is all a graceless pretense. Rest, quiet, and sentiment are no compensation for the loneliness, the annoyance, and the fatigues inseparable from going a fishing. Otherwise a whisky flask would not be the inevitable companion of every man who starts forth with fell purpose to capture the dwellers in the waters. He who really enjoys an experience, per se, does not need to reinforce the pleasure by copious libations from a bottle. It is only when a man wants to revive his drooping spirits that the aid of whisky is invoked.

The more I have investigated the matter, the more I have been impelled to the conclusion that the motive which induces a man to go a fishing is to offer him the opportunity for preposterous lying. If he catches no fish at all, he buys them in the open market and then exhibits the stock as the result of his skill. Or, if he brings in a pitiful string of light weights, he smuggles it in the house and then goes outside; and in recounting his day's experience, he triples the number and quadruples the weight of the catch. This is bad enough; but in nine cases out of ten he drags wife, daughter, son, cook, and chambermaid into the abyss of mendacity to sustain him in his audacious statements. For it is yet to be recorded that any fisherman's story was ever believed without confirmatory proofs. I have known more than one lovely wife and mother, whose home life had been beautiful and character spotless, who began a downward career in a reluctant affirmation of her hus-



band's exploits as a fisherman. But the initial step taken, his conscience became seared and her course was down, down until the point of abject depravity was reached, when, without a blush she would pass hours after hours in building crazy-quilts and constructing spring poetry! Or, if by chance, the fisherman hauls in a fish of fair proportions, he will regale his friends for three-quarters of an hour in describing the efforts the captive made to escape, the dextrous skill he had to use in playing before he was able to land him. Even then he will supplement the statement with a story of a fish twice as big and four times as gamey which got away just as he had him close to the gunwale or the bank.

The story is told of a fisherman who, for fifteen years, occupied one position on an abutment of London bridge day after day, rain or shine, holding his rod and line, but who was never seen to raise a fish. A stranger one day ventured to where he was and asked him if he had caught anything that day and the reply was no, but that three years before he had had a splendid nibble! It was told to illustrate the patience which is supposed to be a characteristic virtue of the ideal fisherman. But the story is a monstrous fabrication. No man would sit so many years to experience the perpetual joy of catching no fish at all. He could drop a line into his cistern, go off and read the Pandects of Justinian, or Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, or some other equally exciting literature and find as many fish awaiting him when he should return and pull in the line. Or, if by a violent stretch of the imagination we may admit that there was such a man, judicially determined to be sane, his reply would unquestionably have been an emphatic statement of the marvelous luck he had had the previous day or week, followed by a detailed statement of the number and avoirdupois of the fish he had landed.

And if any further proof of the improbability of the story were needed, it is shown by the fact that its author utterly fails to chronicle that the man was ever seen to investigate the contents of a whiskey flask!

Fishing and lying being so inseparably connected, extended observations I have made have satisfied me that the paucity of the catch and the lies told about it are always to be found in an inverse ratio, one to the other. Concisely stated, the smaller the catch the bigger the lie, until absolute zero is reached, when lying must, ipso facto, touch the boiling point. I had never ciphered this out until I came to Nantucket. On the island, whether one goes on a yacht trolling, or pushes out in a dory, to heave and haul a drail or a squid, for blue fish, he can always catch enough to satisfy his moderate wishes and sometimes his wildest ambition. With a small field glass I have often seen a fisherman pull into his dory, anchored a few hundred feet from 'Sconset beach, from sixty to seventy fine blue fish in a single afternoon. Then when cod "strike on," in the spring and fall, he who desires to fish can go out and always meet with a fair success and sometimes bring in from fifty to a hundred cod or pollock, off a single tide. From Sasachacha pond a boy or girl will often average a perch a minute for hours at a time, to say nothing of an occasional eel that will seek the favor of being caught to diversify the entertainment. With success so startling, the fisherman finds it impossible to lie in recounting his exploits. Hence his enthusiasm for the sport is chilled and his spirits are so depressed that even deep potations from the bottle will not dispel the gloom that enshrouds him. Discouraged, he leaves for other waters where there is at least little margin left for lying and he never thinks of Nantucket except in the privacy of self-communion.

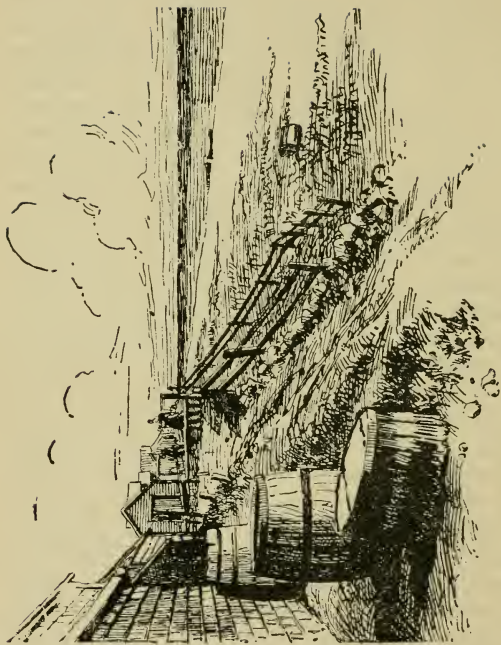
And yet, it occurs to me that there is one apparent exception to the broad statement I have made in respect to the unfavorable condition of things on the island for the manufacture of fishermen's lies. But it is apparent only. Those who seek to take the predaceous shark, wrestle with a game they are not familiar with either in theory [or in practice. They neither know the sharking grounds nor how to catch the ponderous fish when the ground is reached. Of necessity they must rely upon the practical man who furnishes boat, tackle and bait. He it is who baits the fisherman's hook; throws out his line; tells him when a shark has struck; when and how to haul in; helps him in the effort; hammers the shark on his nose with a club to overcome his scruples against leaving the water; pulls him on board the boat; and finally lands him on the beach. Matters are lively for a time and the fisherman may perhaps do one-tenth of the work; but for the contributory aid he does render he feels that he is a hero.

Then comes the temptation to lie. Of course, when the time comes he will tell his friends that he did it all himself! That is to be expected. Perhaps he did, but it was on the principle of *facit per alium facit per se*. On the question of weight, however, he is forced to take advice. There is no platform scale on the beach where the carcass is to be buried. The owner of the boat comes to his rescue. He has an eye to business. He knows the weakness of his patron, and of course wants further employment. And if he shall say that a consumptive shark that might lift the beam at 250, weighs a thousand pounds, the fisherman is more than satisfied. On that authority he does not hesitate to tell his friends that he caught and landed a shark that weighed half a ton! As the statement is not above the average of a fisherman's lie it will probably not be found recorded against him on the day of judgment.

## SAILOR TALK.

The permanent residents of Siasconset are as unique as the place. They are simple in their tastes, and almost to a soul confiding and honest. He who should attempt to take a mean advantage of a stranger is despised by his fellow villagers as much as by the one sought to be his victim. The same may be said of the natives of the island generally. All have idiosyncrasies resulting from the intimate relation of the island to employment on the seas. The older men for years followed the waters. Address any old man you meet as "Captain," and in three cases out of four you will be likely to hit the mark. If he was not a Captain when he retired from service, he was at least a mate, and would have taken command had not the whale fishery ceased to be profitable. The redundancy of Captains is only equaled by the paucity of the men who sailed before the mast. It occurs to me that, perhaps in those days, they were all Captains. At any rate, men who followed the ocean have given character to the island. Some women have had extended experience on the seas, having taken long voyages with their husbands, and are at home in matters pertaining to life on shipboard. Most of

the young men too, have had some experience in the walks of practical seamanship, and all show by their manners, and especially by the use of nautical similitudes in ordinary conversation, their maritime ancestry. If you meet an islander with whom you have become familiarly acquainted, instead of asking you "Where are you going?" two to one the greeting will be "How are you heading?" The farmer whom you engage to supply produce for your table will agree to "land" milk or vegetables from his wagon at your door, every morning, fresh picked from his garden. If a lady wants you to assist her in winding some worsted by holding the skein, and you are careless in the performance of the office, she will tell you to hold it "taut" or you will get the yarn in a snarl. An old captain told me that in eating his breakfast he had got a bone "athwart" his throat. If you ride in a box wagon, the teamster—it may be an old captain—may ask you to shift your seat "fore" or "aft" or "midships" or to set to the "leeward" as the case may be. When you try to get a joke off on an old "salt" and fail, you may be told that it was always hard work to get to the "windward" of him. A young lady who walked from her bedroom into the parlor at night without a lamp, told me she ran "head on" to the mantel-piece. She might have added, as her nose was bruised, that she had "shivered her cut-water," though she didn't. An ardent temperance advocate (and there are many such on the island) stated that he was drunk but once, and then he didn't get relief until he "broke bulk," and he concluded that one experience was enough for a life-time. All these expressions, and many more equally quaint, I have heard in ordinary conversation, and the speakers were quite unaware in what they said that there was anything which should strike one as strange or unusual.



Ye Korymbosy's Back off Count.

But I don't believe some things I have heard as having been uttered in current speech. I wholly discredit the statement that a Nantucket girl complained to her mother that her beau, on the previous evening, had kissed her unawares on her "starboard cheek" and that the fright caused her to jump so suddenly from her seat that she "parted her corset hawser!" Nor do I take any stock in the story that the wife of an old whaler, on seeing a bustle on the person of a modern society woman, wondered what use she had for such big "quarter galleries." Nor that a young man after a long voyage told his sweetheart, who was standing on the wharf awaiting his landing, that he knew her the minute he "sighted her cat-heads."

Then the family nomenclature of the island is quite as singular in the frequent recurrence of certain names, and it always excites the remark of visitors who make protracted stays. The Coffins; and Folgers; and Swains; and Husseys; and Starbucks; and Macys; and Gardners; and Chases; and Pitmans; and Paddocks; and Bunkers; and Colemans; are everywhere visible on street signs, or door plates, or are heard in every day speech. Less than a dozen names are included in the list of original settlers, and nearly half of them are no longer heard on the island. A few other names were added by accessions of families from the continent, and thus the list of early names on the island was swelled to perhaps fifteen. Their descendants married and intermarried. Nantucket boys might bring wives from the main land, but Nantucket girls didn't feel at liberty to propose marriage to off-islanders as an inducement for them to come to the island and settle, though many were carried off to become wives and mothers elsewhere. Hence the original names have been perpetuated on Nantucket to an extent which, to the stranger becomes confusing. The scriptural injunction to "multiply and re-



plenish the earth" meant something with a religious people. They went at the business as if there was an express contract with a forfeiture for non-compliance. The net result was, that in less than 175 years there were nearly 10,000 resident inhabitants. Some of this number was probably due to migration from the continent, but whatever was gained in this way was nearly compensated by the departure of islanders for the main land. The stock of christian names became low and in time was exhausted. The doubling of initial appellations was a necessity, and even then the first letter of the second name was not sufficient to avoid confusion. Thus we hear of Charles Frederick Coffin; and George Frederick Coffin; and George Wendell Macy; and William Hussey Macy; and Roland Bunker Hussey; and William Clark Myrick; and Thomas Clarkson Folger; and many others who are always spoken of by their full names as here written. Then "Jr." is a very common addition, and "2nd" and "3rd" and even "4th" are addenda to surnames to assure identity. A Folger living on The Bank for months sought a name for a child which no other Folger had taken. He found it at last in "Oscar."

But visitors are bothered to recollect given names, and they designate them by their employments or the localities in which they reside. Thus there was a "Light-house Folger," a "Vegetable Folger," a "Blue Fish Folger" and a "Captain Folger." Then the natives sometimes designate a particular resident by the locality of his residence. A Joseph Fisher was known as "Madeket Joe" and a Charles Coffin as "Pokomo Charles" that they might not be confounded with other Joseph Fishers or Charles Coffins.

To such an extent has the intermarriage of the descendants of the original settlers gone, that nearly every man,

woman and child descended from them is related to every other. Cousinship, and uncleship and auntship overlap in a half dozen directions. A Hussey may be an uncle to a Coffin and a nephew of a Starbuck, and the Starbuck and the Coffin be second cousins to each other. Captain Baxter is a recognized oracle on matters of family relationship, as on everything else. What he doesn't know is not worth learning. He says that there are men on the island who can be shown to be their own great uncles! That he knows of children who are the second cousins of their own mothers! Furthermore he has pointed out to me more than one man who is both a brother-in-law and nephew of his third cousin. And to cap the climax, he said that he once called at a house in town at which a tea-party was under full headway, and of the eight ladies present, five were both first and second cousins and sisters-in-law of one another! And yet to this day not one of them had had her mind shattered by the effort to trace out the relationship. And the Captain told me that if I doubted the story he could show me the cover of the identical tea-pot in which the inspiring beverage was drawn on that memorable afternoon! With evidence so convincing and near at hand, I could only express myself entirely satisfied!

But a still more marvelous coincidence came to my knowledge. On the eve of Fourth of July, a few years since, the oldest boy of John Asa Fisher, 2nd, exploded a fire-cracker under the mare of Peleg Starbuck, Jr., as she was standing hitched to a box wagon on the corner of Main and Whale streets. The mare didn't appreciate the act as an ebullition of youthful patriotism. To her equine understanding it was intended as a joke on herself. That she didn't like the joke is manifest from the fact that she ran away and broke the wagon into a dozen pieces and knocked down and ran over Jonathan David Myrick. The

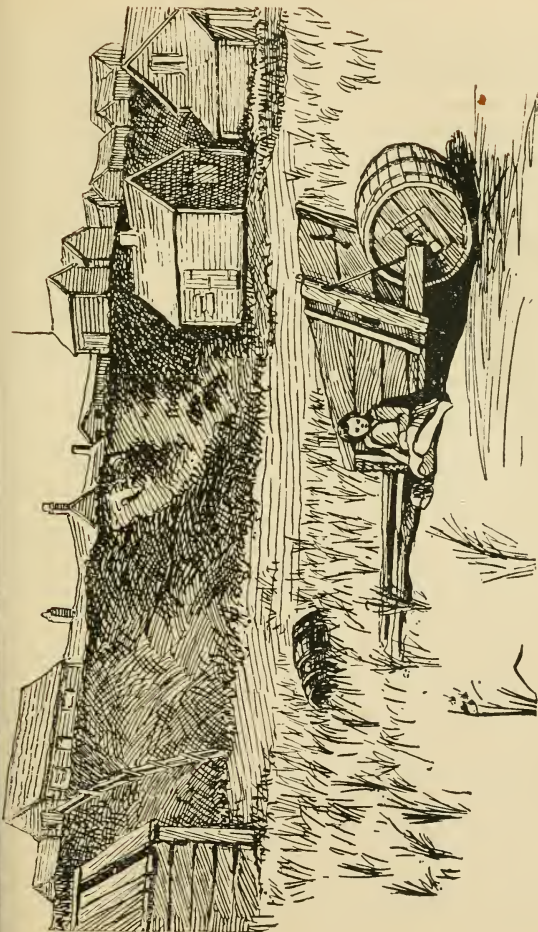
injured man was carried into the store of Ebenezer Pad-dack, 4th. Obed Gardner, 3rd, ran for Doctor Pitman, who came at once. But the man was so much injured that in spite of surgical aid he died before night. 'Squire Coffin held an inquest on the body. Frederick William Folger made the coffin. Elder Macy preached the funeral discourse. Rowland Bunker Hussey wrote and published an obituary in the *Inquirer and Mirror*. Jabez Chase, 2nd, dug the grave and Washington Irving Coleman furnished the headstone. And an orthodox quaker named Swain, who never draws on his imagination at less than 10 days' sight, solemnly assured me that every one here named in connection with the catastrophe, including himself, was within the degree of fourth cousin of every other except the mare; and how it happened that she could not claim kinship was a question which convulsed the island for over six months, for the mare was a native and had a pedigree as long as the bow that Friend Swain had drawn for my edification.

## SCRATCHING GRAVEL.

At Siasconset a man plays many parts. A family cannot be reared and educated with its head following a single pursuit. There are no organized industries, if I except building, which for the past few years has been active to provide accommodations for the annually increasing patronage of summer visitors. There is but little farming in the strict sense of the word. There is land, thousands of acres, but the soil is lean and light, and without liberal fertilization is not productive. For grazing it might be made valuable. At one period it was largely devoted to sheep raising. There were fully ten thousand sheep on the island.

But farming cannot be successfully followed without farmers. I know all about it. I have tried it and can speak feelingly on the subject. Years ago the strange impulse seized me to become a farmer that I might try thenceforward to lead an honest life. To that end I bought a splendid farm, well situated, and with a generous soil. Fearing that one farm might not assure the result I sought, I bought another. Somehow or other, my

methods of farming were not such as to result in a bewildering success. In fact, during a three years, active pursuit of distinction as an agriculturist, I found it absolutely necessary to follow my legitimate pursuit in the city for nine months in the year to enable me to make both ends meet on my farm, at the end of the season. Gradually the appalling fact was forced upon my mind that the more I was present on the property the smaller were the crops, a consideration which constrained me to abandon the idea of farming except in a vicarious way. Subsequent experience didn't change the aspect of things. Cultivating the soil by mail and telegraph was not, in my case, certainly, attended with a success so startling that I can conscientiously recommend the plan for general adoption. I have no confidence that with the telephone I could have improved matters. Indeed the belief grew upon me until it came to be at last a settled conviction that I was not built upon the right model to achieve either fame or fortune as a tiller of the soil. It was with reluctance that I made the confession, but a decent regard for truth compelled me to disclose the fact, which I did in the strictest confidence to a few of my most intimate friends; and as usual in such cases, each one told his friend under an injunction of secrecy, and that friend told another under the same conditions, and in a fortnight's time it was known all over the entire county, and in six months throughout the State. At all events, I had my belly-full of farming, and it would not have required a great deal of argument or even prayerful persuasion to have induced me to sell out. Indeed I tried to. I earnestly sought for a man who had it in him to build up an enterprise on a domain where my æsthetic methods had only borne annual crops of disappointment, and who, I thought, was sighing for a spot in which were buried the blasted hopes of a saddened wayfarer.



Scen<sup>e</sup> of Banks & ye Aincyn<sup>th</sup> Fysh C<sup>o</sup>te & ye Fysh Ho<sup>u</sup>ses

whereon to illustrate his genius in actual works to an astonished and admiring world. I wanted to show to him the promised land. For years I waited, but he didn't come.

On Nantucket, sailors do not seem to be any better fitted for farming than city-bred men. When young they don't tackle kindly to it, and when old they do it in the most perfunctory manner. When the whale fishery ceased to pay, many who retired from the waters essayed farming. But what they had learned about plowing the seas was of no service to them when they tried to plow the land. They met obstacles at all points. When they ordered an ox-team to "port" or "starboard," the animals were either obtuse or perverse in obeying the command. "Gee!" and "Haw!" were imperatives of direction without meaning to the average mariner. To begin the study of a dictionary of land navigation after years of experience at sea was out of the question. When he undertook to manage horses, as the Irish sailor said, he was "all at sea." Everything was reversed. The steering gear, instead of being in the stern, where on shipboard, he had been taught to look for it, he found in the bow. That of itself was confusing. When on a vessel, if he put his helm a-starboard, it was fore ordained that she would sheer to port. But in driving, when he pulled the starboard rein instead of going to port the wagon hauled off in the other direction. That was not all. A double team was a further complication. As he scanned it with his weather eye it seemed to him as a sort of catamaran intended for land service. He had seen such duplex craft off the coast of Brazil, but they always seemed to him awkward to manage. So far as he was concerned, he was willing to grant an exclusive right in perpetuity to South Americans to use them. They never inspired him with a sense of safety as a sea-going



craft. But a catamaran on land, to his mind, was still more uncertain. He could never feel sure of reaching port with wagon and freight in good order. At any moment, the port horse might take a notion to 'kick the starboard horse on the port quarter, and if the event happened when he was tacking ship, the Lord only could tell where vessel and cargo would land. Again, the starboard horse might balk and run stern on the wagon at the precise moment when the port horse was making headway under a six-knot breeze! What then would happen? To the nautical mind, these possibilities were suggestive, if not portentous. Therefore, by tacit consent, double teams were allowed to go into disuse, and to this day, the regulation vehicle on Nantucket, for pleasure or heavy work, is a box-wagon or a box-cart. And though a few double carriages have been brought to or made on the island for livery stable keepers to cater to the caprice of "swell" visitors who wish to ride over moors, the Nantucket man and woman anchor their faith to the bottom-boards of the one-horse box-wagon.

Farming therefore has never thrived on Nantucket, and probably five-sixths of the land is to-day uncultivated. A few farmers cut hay enough for their own stock and to supply some for use in the town. Some sheep are raised, enough for lamb and mutton for home consumption, and to furnish a little for the continent. Milk, eggs, and chickens, are also produced in considerable quantities for the table for summer visitors. But there is scarce any cultivation of the soil except for the production of garden vegetables. That is one employment which is profitable during the warm season. Another source of income is letting their horses and wagons to parties who make jaunts over the island. Others devote themselves during the summer to blue, scup, perch, lobster, clam and qua-

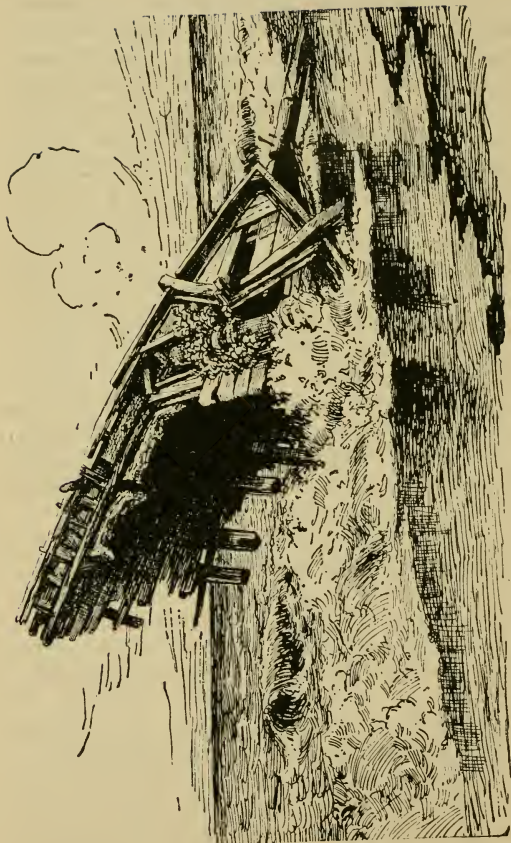
haug fishing. Some families rent rooms furnished to visitors, who prefer the quiet of a private house to life in a hotel. Now and then an old sailor who is used to the pack-needle finds employment in making awnings and tents and setting them up on spars on the beach to afford shelter from the sun to visitors who delight to be close to the breakers. The wives of residents, some of them intelligent and well-to-do, earn money by doing laundry work and making bread, biscuits and pastry for visiting families; while some of the daughters are employed in hotels and boarding-houses as chambermaids and waitresses and thus they obtain the means to further their education during the residue of the year.

But in September the visitors vanish. Hardly have the people got their houses to rights after weeks of neglect that they might serve their off-island guests, when, presto! the fall fishing begins, and then, teamster, farmer, gardener, mechanic, laborer, and perhaps store clerk and even old shipmaster are out in their dories catching cod until winter sets in. Then the islander finds time to do odds and ends of repairing of house, or stable, or boat, or harness, until a heavy western gale sets in and drives the seaweed—kelp it is called—in large piles upon the beach. At once all hands turn to with their forks and throw it back from the shore to let it drain and afterwards to sell it to gardeners and farmers to use for fertilizing the soil for another year's crop of table produce. In the Spring comes another fishing season which lasts about six weeks, and as the cod disappear, bluefish "strike on" and the event is the premonition of the visitors.

But at any season, though more especially during the winter months, a scene of wild excitement may occur upon The Bank. A vessel, which for days has been approaching the coast under continuous cloud and has lost her

reckoning, or moving through the dense fogs which sometimes occur off the land, may strike upon Bass Rip to the eastward or on "The Old Man's Back" to the southward; and when the fog lifts or the morning breaks, is in plain sight from The Bank pounded by heavy seas upon the sands. In a moment everybody is out-of-doors. Telescopes are leveled at the distressed vessel. Volunteer crews quickly assemble at the life-saving station of the Massachusetts Humane Society, and draw out the life-boat and the appliances for such emergencies and move it forward across the beach to launch on the surf at once if it can be done with safety. But sometimes a heavy gale is blowing, and billows in huge volumes are surging upon the sand, and throwing a white fringe a hundred feet towards The Bank. Hours may thus be passed before it is possible to leave on their errand of mercy for the rescue of imperiled lives. Clad in their oil-cloth garments they await their opportunity. Statecraft, learning, eloquence, social position and style, stand abashed before the nobility of simple manhood. Hearts to impel, courage to undertake, and brawn to successfully encounter and override dangers take rank as the highest qualities. On The Bank they hear the voices of their wives, children, parents, sisters and brothers. There are their little homes with the small savings of years of toil. As they stand their lives are safe. Before them is the ocean with its waters lashed by the gale into wild tumult. The shifting fringe of spray in which they stand is the line that divides safety from danger. They watch with steadfast gaze the movement of the mighty billows as they come thundering upon the beach, and await their opportunity. They are alongside the life-boat, in which the oars are ready shipped in the rowlocks. At last the supreme moment comes. A mighty breaker dashes towards them; and then, a dozen strong

Wood House at Seneca Falls



arms push out the boat to meet it, and as it lifts the bow from the sands each man springs into his seat, and quicker than thought is pulling heavily at his oar, and the boat is moving out from shore, while the veteran sailor in command stands in the stern with the steering oar in hand, to guide the little craft to the rescue of their fellow-beings. Steadily they pull in unison, riding over the crest of one wave to disappear from sight in the trough of the sea beyond, again to appear on another, never for a moment resting in their labors, until those whom they seek to succor are reached. In the meantime glasses are leveled at their little boat, through which anxious eyes are watching until it seems but a little speck dancing on the surface of the waters. They may find the seas breaking heavily against and perhaps over the vessel, with either bow or stern raised out of the water. The passengers, or crew, or both are taken on their boat, and again they push off towards the shore which they reach after hours of absence, tired and sore from continuous exertion, and it may be with the seeds of a lingering disease sown in their systems by exposure to the bleak winds of the winter.

At other times the vessel, without warning, may be driven directly on the beach in the midst of a heavy snow storm or fog. Then the residents on The Bank can extend their aid more readily and effectually both in saving lives and property. The excitement is still more intense, for everything is within sight, even to the smallest detail of procedure.

For the services of the brave men who imperil their lives to save those of their fellow-beings, what is the reward? It may be only the thanks of the grateful people whom they have rescued. It may be a medal voted by the Humane Society. Or they may secure pieces of property which have floated upon the beach or they have picked up

in the waters, and for which there is no claimant; or, it may be they will receive salvage on property they have saved to its owners in large quantities. But fifty or a hundred dollars for the daring courage of a man in behalf of those in peril, is a large sum to receive; and oftener the result to him is merely nominal.

This is but a brief sketch of careers of the people of the island who live by the labor of their hands. There is scarce a man who does not during the year work in, at least, two or three callings, and some are so handy as to find themselves useful in a half dozen. In 'Sconset is a representative character of this class.

Captain John Morris has become an almost every-day necessity. He is an old sailor in both the whale fishery and the merchant service. He is now the factotum of the village. He is the bricklayer and plasterer; the house painter; the jack carpenter; the clock repairer; the tent and awning maker. He is no slouch when it comes to repairing furniture and upholstering. His talents as a hydraulic engineer are practically recognized by calling on him to put pumps in order when they manifest perversity in the matter of lifting water. Of course he is a fisherman.

There are tradesmen on the island in various branches. Their stores are mostly located on the main street of Nantucket, or others immediately intersecting it. Some, begun years ago, on out-of-the-way thoroughfares, are still continued in the same localities. The tradesmen exhibit the versatility of genius that I have described as common to men in other callings. The pursuits they follow are sometimes strangely heterogeneous. One dry-goods merchant unites with his regular trade the sale of stocks and bonds. His store is the stock exchange. He is "bull" or "bear," according as he prognosticates the market. In dry goods he is generally a "bull," but with old stock he ham-

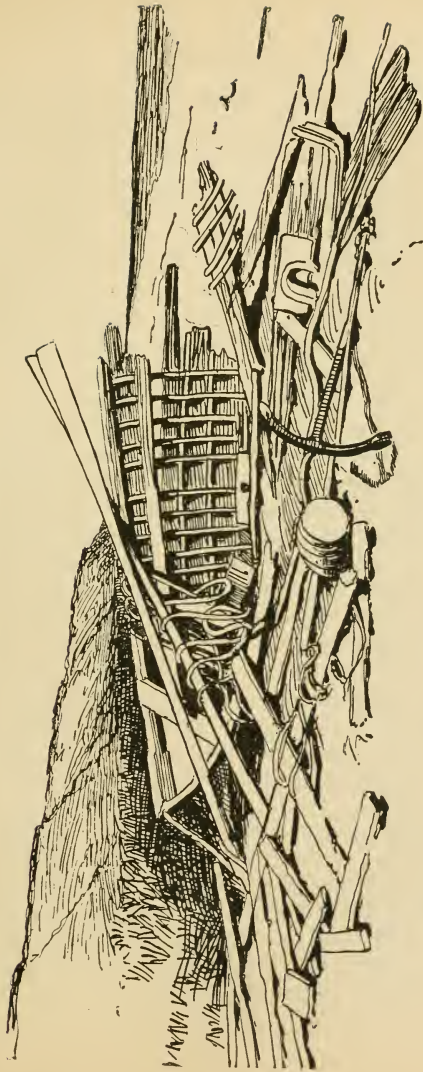


mers the market until he is rid of it. Another one was for years the popular proprietor of a leading hotel. At meal time he moved lively among the guests to see that their appetites were satisfied. Between meals he tumbled muslins, and dress goods, and cloths about on the counter, and in seductive tones induced ladies to purchase. A hardware and stove dealer accepts fire risks, and he also uses his blandishments with both buyers and sellers in the effort to effect exchanges of real property. Another is an extensive dealer in junk, though Ann street would discount and beat him every time. The tinsmith sells crockery and glassware, while the grocers add to their subsistence by handling crockery and woodenware. The stationer deals in bric-a-brac, oil paintings and antique crockery and furniture. The coal dealer sells hay and feed, but he sighed for new fields of usefulness, and so became the agent of the Fall River and Newport lines of steamers and of the Telegraph Company. As he has still some time left on his hands it is expected that he will take the agency for the sale of pianos and organs, and perhaps start a photographic gallery. The avarice of the lumber merchant was not satisfied with the profits in his regular line, so he took up brick, lime and cement, and then to make both ends meet he started a coal-yard. The dealer in fire-wood unites tiles and chimney-pots and jig-sawing with his legitimate business. The watchmaker is at the same time an umbrella surgeon, an artist in oil, and finds time to cultivate his taste for music. He plays the fiddle and executes on the violin with equal facility. Another runs a circulating library and is also a taxidermist. The furniture dealer has added stoves to his regular trade, and he strengthens his vocal chords by exercising the functions of an auctioneer. The dentist paints pictures, cultivates the muse of poetry and the graces of oratory. He will



plug a tooth, write an ode, a sonnet, or an epic, or deliver an address on the slightest provocation. In winters when everybody else hybernates, his friends let him loose to lecture on the continent.

The stranger who visits the town is often startled by a phenomenon of desolation that comes on with no more premonition than a sneeze. It occurs at mid-day. As the church clock strikes twelve, merchant, lawyer, capitalist, clerk, mechanic and apprentice, hurriedly surveys the shrunken proportions of his abdominal region, and with dangerous haste rushes headlong to the street, locks the door of store, office, or shop, and makes lively strides towards home. Then only is the Nantucket man in a hurry. The objective point is dinner. Gain is lost sight of. Sympathy appeals to him in vain. The music of the peripatetic hand-organ loses its charms. Cyclone, nor earthquake, will deflect him from his course until the corporeal hold is stowed with noonday cheer. The luckless visitor who wishes to buy something must walk listlessly about the streets for an hour until the Nantucket stomach is satisfied. Even then its possessor may go to the barber shop, or do some odd job about the house to extend the purgatorial experience of the stranger for a quarter or a half hour more. During the season of summer visitors there are a few exceptions to this rule. But in autumn, winter and spring it is universal. At such times one is impressed with a sense of loneliness like unto that which would be felt by a North Carolina 'possum let loose to wander in the streets of Pompeii under the moonlight.



The Relics of a Wreight: North East Storm.

## PHYSIC.

FOR over a century there was no doctor on Nantucket. Zacheus Macy, a man without medical education, was for sixty years the bone-setter when casualties made surgical assistance on the island necessary. It is recorded that he did the service with a creditable skill, and it is also stated that, in about fifty years, he performed over two thousand operations. Breaking bones and making dislocations was evidently an important industry in those days on Nantucket. Still it didn't pay. For the surgeon regarded his skill as a special gift, and would never receive compensation for his services! This fact lived long in the memories of the people, greatly to the detriment of the professional doctor when he effected a lodgment, for come he did at last. But he found himself on missionary ground. The people had lived for generations in appalling ignorance of sickness. What was worse, they didn't seem inclined to take lessons. But a more abject moral degradation was made manifest in an utter want of understanding that a doctor didn't physic for fun, but in dead earnest, and expected to be paid for it, too. Converts were scarce and fees were sparingly paid.

Of course the doctor was an old school practitioner. To impress the people with the importance of his services he had to resort to heroic treatment. Anything short of that the patient didn't appreciate. Drastic purgative, powerful alterative, lancet, blister, actual cautery and turnkey were convincing evidences that something was the matter with them. He had his own way in practice except that there was not enough of it.

But in the course of time the homœopathic doctor invaded the island. Opposition oftentimes stimulates business. On Nantucket it didn't, though it was fierce, and all the more so because between rival schools of medicine. When doctors disagree in the fundamentals of theory and practice, the confidence of patients is apt to be a little shaky at the butt. The code of medical ethics would not permit him of the regular faculty to counsel with, or even tolerate one whom the canons of the profession declared to be culpably irregular, and, not to draw too fine a point upon it, a quack. With contemptuous sneer he furtively glanced at the stunted proportions of the pocket-case of his rival which held the attenuated medicaments to be smilingly taken on the principle of *similia similibus curantur*. He of the high potencies scowled at the ponderous pill bags loaded down with calomel; and jalap; and blue mass; and laudanum; and paregoric; and spirits of nitre; and pungent carminatives; and Spanish flies; and perhaps a surreptitious lancet to have a quiet bleed in memory of bygone days. This condition of things nearly ruined the business. The regular doctor largely lost his practice, and he of the new school didn't gain it.

Beside, the people were epidemically healthy. It was not from natural obduracy, but to discourage the idea of making sickness and expense convertible terms. The Nantucketer could adapt himself to divers callings in

handicraft, and he didn't see why, if he had any ailment, he could not do double duty and both prescribe physic and swallow it. By so doing he could select a more palatable dose, which he could not do if the doctor bossed the business. Besides he could make it more acceptable by mixing it with old Medford rum, and that, experience had proven to him, 'was most "masterly warmin' to his inwards." This indifference to medical learning and ability became chronic. It was distressing to the representatives of both schools. It was a weary pilgrimage, and all the time living on short commons, before the doctor felt his calling and election sure.

But, by a stroke of genius, this itching desire of the Nantucket man to practice on himself, and his tendency to thrift in saving doctors' fees, were turned to profitable account. How and where negotiations were had, has never been revealed; but certain it is that, without diminution of professional antagonism and the personal animosity proceeding therefrom, with withering scowls and contemptuous frowns exchanged between allopathic sulky and homœopathic gig, diplomatic notes were exchanged and secret conferences had, which resulted in the starting of a drug store in their joint names, stocked with a full line of pharmaceutical preparations, to which they added patent medicines in variety sufficient to cover every known disease, with profuse explanations of their curative powers and directions for use.

The success of the movement was simply bewildering. Men who had suffered from good health, acute, chronic, or malignant, became conscious of ailments that needed immediate attention. The apothecary shop invited their patronage. With understandings illuminated by the wrappers of medicine bottles and boxes, they studied prognostics and diagnostics, and dove deep into the mysteries of

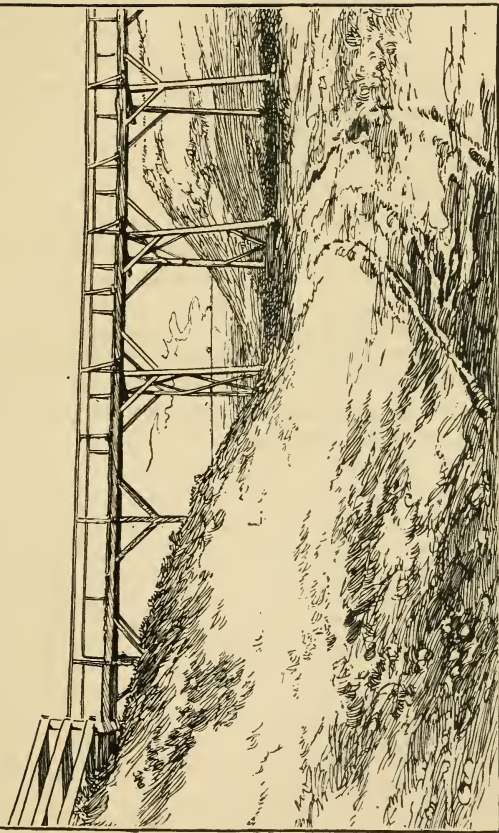
pathology and morbid growth and development. They bought and got around one remedy after another until muscle, and nerve, and cartilage, were saturated with curealls. If the direction were to take a spoonful every two hours, they reasoned that, if they took two spoons full every hour they would get well four times as fast! The profits on the medicines sold were greater than the fees the doctors had ever believed possible, even in moments of delirious hope. That was not all. Simple ailments soon become complex. That which, at the inception, was a mild colic, soon involved abdominal viscera, kidney, liver, spleen, diaphragm, stomach, aorta, spinal marrow, thoracic cavity and even cerebrum and cerebellum. Still they were not happy. In fact, they found themselves running on shoals in trying to navigate medical waters. They had to take soundings. At last, reluctantly, one or the other doctor was called in to pilot them to port. He left them anchored in a haven of health, and ready to resume self-prescription whenever they again felt slightly under the weather.

It is evident that the doctor is on the island to stay, the very few there is of him. To his credit, he never lets his patients die. Old people are met everywhere. Those who are not old are aged. Nobody under middle age is allowed to remain on the island unless he takes out a license. When people arrive at the standard of old age, somewhere in the eighties, they anchor. Years go by. Still they are seen moving slowly about unchanged in appearance and walk. Seemingly Death has a mortgage on their corporeal estates, but he never forecloses.

Generations ago a grave yard was started so that the island might be rendered attractive to atrabilious people who were seeking a comfortable place in which to die. It was conceived in fraud of the rights of gloomy misanthropes,

and the scheme should long since have been exposed. The native never dies. The dying visitor renews his lease of life. The graveyard didn't pay. The only one who made anything out of it was the man who was allowed to mow the grass from it each year. Now and then a sailor who fell from the cross-trees or yard-arm, or down the hatchway of a ship and was killed, was planted in the ground. But the paucity of the headstones was proof positive that Nantucket was no place for a man to die. At last the promoters of the enterprise had to resort to importing corpses for burial. They were smuggled in after nightfall and interred. By this discreditable means they have fairly stocked the ground and make a respectable show of graves. But in time the natives, by adopting high living and fashionable habits, and especially by prescribing medicines for themselves, may be brought to realize the propriety of getting up home-made cadavers instead of paying tribute to foreign manufacturers.





Railroad bridge over the canyon.

## LAW.

The Nantucket Bar stands pre-eminent in its profound appreciation of equity and justice, its heroic determination to further their purposes even at personal sacrifice, and the amicable feelings existing within it. There is only one of him for nearly thirty-five hundred inhabitants. With the same ratio in New York, the list of lawyers would shrink to a beggarly three hundred and fifty, instead of over five thousand for its population of a million and a quarter. Clients' pockets would become plethoric for want of somebody to encourage litigation. Judges would hold sinecures, and their positions would be abolished by an amendment to the organic law. The Nantucket man never does anything to-day which can just as well be put off until to-morrow, save, always, eating and sleeping. Even the beginning of a lawsuit is postponed until it can be attended to without too much exertion. Often before the time comes, both parties get into a less litigious and an even tranquil frame of mind. The Quakers who have given character to the island have left the imprint of peace upon the impulses of the people. The only moneyed institution in Town is the "Pacific" Bank. But

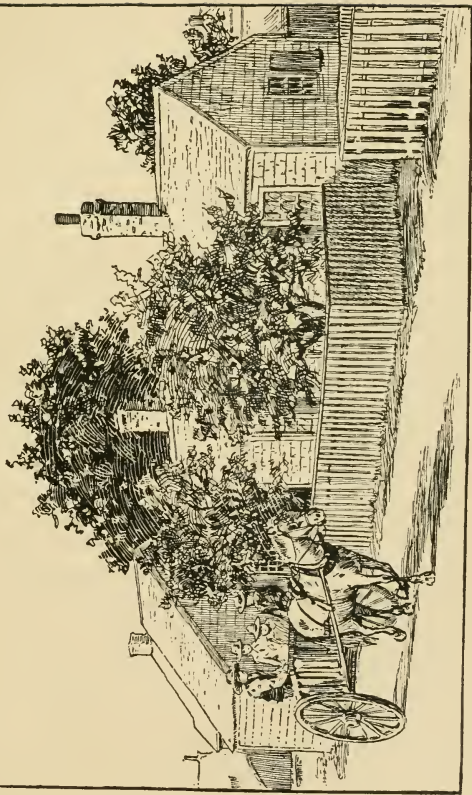
if through natural perversity, men who have differences cannot, or will not settle them, one goes to the Bar and asks him to begin a suit. Viewing such a procedure as possible, the other party goes to the Bar to defend him, if a suit shall be begun. The Bar is embarrassed. To take a retainer from both sides is unprofessional. He is acquainted with, and it may be is the personal friend of both parties to the issue. He is a lonesome lawyer on a lonely isle. Feelings of common humanity will not permit him to throw the weight of his knowledge, and experience, and skill in favor of one side when there is no one to advocate the cause of the other. Glad visions of fees are snuffed out in the twinkling of an eye. By natural gravitation he falls into the position of a peacemaker. He hears the statements of each side. He persuades one. He remonstrates with the other. Perhaps he cajoles, and, if necessary, threatens both. Finally he undertakes an unofficial arbitrament and suggests a basis of settlement which, though unsatisfactory to one and perhaps both, each feels bound to accept. For the sacrifices he makes, he may get their joint and several thanks; or he may not. He has accepted a retainer from neither, nor has he begun or defended an action. Indeed, by his influence, they have been debarred the luxury of a lawsuit. Hence neither party feels that the Bar is entitled to a fee and he is too modest to ask for one. Thanks, though ever so heartily tendered, will not stay the stomachs of a small wife and large family buy Spring bonnets, nor even plug-hats, and broadcloth suits, which the Bar must always wear; or contribute to the Home Missionary Society, even with ten pound bluefish at twenty cents a piece, fresh codfish at four cents a pound, and with time to set lobster pots, and with quahaugs and clams to be had for the digging.

But when the difference is with an off islander, the Nan-

tucket Bar braces up. He is retained by the native, and is ready to prosecute or defend; to draw declaration or plea; to interpose demurrer; to apply for or move to dissolve injunction; to proceed at common law, or in equity, or in admiralty. He will examine and cross-examine witnesses; object to evidence; except to rulings; will argue and request to charge; will abuse the opposing counsel; will flatter the jury and bully the Court in the most approved manner. It is to be hoped that he always gets a good fee. It is doubtful.

But the Bar does have an office practice. He examines titles; draws deeds and mortgages, contracts and agreements. He executes commissions issued out of the courts of foreign jurisdiction. He even draws wills, though for what, the Lord only knows, for nobody ever dies. And he is a real estate and pension agent. And then too, he is a Justice of the Peace and Trial Justice, in which capacities he administers justice when each party acts as his own lawyer or when foreign lawyers are retained. Then he pockets his legal fees. They are not enormous. Still his professional joints are at times a little stiff from non-use and the lack of lubrication with generous compensation. For years his morning prayers and nightly vigils have been that the Lord would vouchsafe another lawyer for the island. When Mr. Charles O'Connor came from New York and took up his residence in Town a ray of hope illumined the darkness of the horizon which encircled the solitary lawyer. But so soon as it was announced that the distinguished jurist had come to escape clients, and not to get them, the Bar subsided into a hopeless gloom.

This being the situation of affairs in respect to civil practice, on the criminal side the outlook is no more promising. There is no crime except on the skirmish line.



Ye Widow Mitchell, her horse.

The small boy who makes predatory excursions against melon patches is about the worst malefactor known. As there are several of him, it is difficult to connect a special offence with a particular boy. Thus it is that he always escapes the condign punishment that otherwise would be meted out to him, to strike terror into the hearts of evil-doers. The tramp is a being heard and read of, but never seen on the island. Dwelling-houses are like treasures in heaven where thieves do not break in and steal. Often they are left for hours unlocked while the families are absent. When locked, the keys are theoretically hidden under the door-step or under a side shingle by the door casing, but practically in full view of the passing wayfarer. For years at a time, the common jail is without an inmate. Some twenty years ago the solitary occupant sent word to the selectmen that if they didn't fix it so as to keep the sheep from running in and bothering him he should leave. And he meant business too. The structure is a ramshackle affair, too dilapidated for security and not old enough for a picturesque ruin. In appearance it is on the dividing line between a building that a close-fisted old curmudgeon would willingly dedicate to the use of his poor relations rent free, and a haunted house. It has ponderous bolts and bars on doors and windows, but would have no terrors for a third-rate New York sneak thief.

Years ago an offending colored brother who was awaiting trial on a charge of petty larceny, pried up the roof with a bench that was in his cell, and vamosed from the island in a stolen dory. Another prisoner, each night lifted a board from the floor of his dungeon, went outside, and had a good time about the Town, but was always back in his cell before morning to suffer the penalty of his offence and greet the keeper on his early visit with a sad and dejected look.



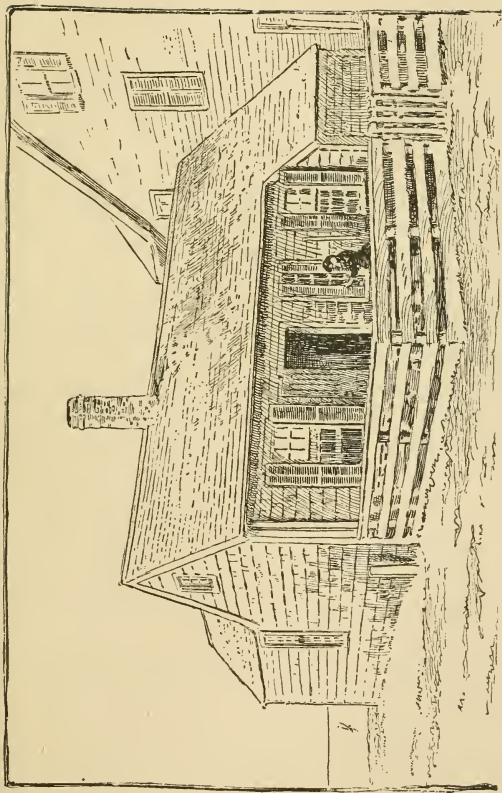
The jailer himself has a soft thing of it. For some unaccountable reason, the Town authorities in starting the enterprise decided to pay him an annual salary with house rent thrown in and not by the piece. It was a mistake that has been a source of poignant regret ever since. If it were not for the exertion it would involve it would be changed even now. The salary was fixed at fifty dollars a year. For years the position was held by the father of the present incumbent, who received it as a family hereditary. It is a serious question with the taxpayers whether the institution ought not to be abolished. The jailer has everything to get and nothing to do. The tax to pay his salary is regarded as a reckless waste of the people's substance. Still further it is urged that it may be the insidious beginning of a hereditary aristocracy of office holders which may grow in proportions until it shall sap the foundations of republican institutions, sow the seeds of monarchy and bear ultimate fruit in absolutism, co-extensive with the present domain of American freedom! Yet, the most vehement croaker does not dare at town meeting to move to dispense with the dungeon or its keeper, because he inwardly feels that, at any moment, a cyclone of human turpitude may burst upon and sweep the island, leaving in its track ruin and disaster in decimated hen-roosts, rifled pork barrels, depleted sugar boxes and plundered tea canisters, to say nothing of peccadillos in the way of embezzlement, defalcation and violations of trusts.



## DIVINITY.

If the clergymen of Nantucket are paid good salaries they hold enviable positions. But the presumptions are against it. The Quaker preacher whose influence was once coextensive with the island had, for generations, inveighed against a hireling ministry. His words sank deep into the hearts of his hearers, and they never forgot the admonition when they pulled out of the meeting-house and anchored their faiths within the pews of steepled houses. It is doubtful if the ministers find their incomes so great as to be a care and a burden. They are not rated in the books of the commercial agencies. Their credit is good, not because of treasures laid up on earth, but because of their honorable standing as men.

But it is an easy job for the pastors to keep their lambs from going astray. If one of them has a sinful impulse, he feels too lazy to be wicked, if no higher motive actuated his course. There are no great local sins to call for anathema, and very few small ones to demand reproach. Pastors and people, without regard to sectarian lines, earnestly co-operate in the advocacy of temperance and good morals, and the temperance meeting is a regular



W<sup>th</sup> Henry Dick, Ky kovs.

weekly gathering. With such a community the preacher's invective must be aimed against extra-insular wickedness. When slavery existed Nantucket was the hotbed of deep-seated opposition to that relic of barbarism.

There are no polemical discourses to disturb the general good feeling which exists among the people, and much less to arouse angry passion. The sleep-inducing properties of the air will not admit of the surface of the religious waters being rippled, though several denominations are represented, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic. The most aggressive member of the church militant catches the infection of peace on earth and good will toward men. The Friends, too, have their meeting-house, in which First and Fifth day meetings are regularly held. Of the peaceful they are the most peaceful. Neither minister nor elder is fired by the zeal of George Fox, their founder, to enter the sanctuaries of others and cry aloud against their ungodliness; nor do angry churchmen or magistrates feel it incumbent to abate the Quaker by prison bars or gibbets. That they were once in a large majority on the island I have never wondered. Its air is suited to their peaceful thoughts, and the thoughts, in their turn, have given tone to the people. Conscience is everywhere manifested. The cheats and petty knaves can almost be counted on one's fingers.

In no other community has woman been exalted to the commanding position she holds on the island. In the religious meetings of the Society of Friends, her gift to preach was as readily recognized as that of man. Husband, and brother, and son, were away on protracted voyages, often lasting for years, and to the wives was confided and upon them was thrown the responsibility of the nurture and education of children and the care and management of

property. How well they performed the tasks thus assigned to them is manifest in the character of their descendants. Woman was the active force in moulding the character of the people; and though there are but few of the Friends left, she still occupies the proud position accorded to her on the island a century and a half ago. In public meetings her right to speak is a matter of course. In nearly every society women are among the officers, and sometimes they hold the highest positions. The culmination of this feeling is found in the fact that the present pastor of the Congregational Church—the oldest on the island—is a lady and a native. For years the society had had difficulty in procuring stated preaching. The intelligent manner in which she had spoken at meetings resulted in her taking the pulpit for a single day, and so well did she fill the position that she has continued for four years, though without ordination, at the head of the congregation. At last, in 1884, she was formally ordained to the pastorate, and her daily life and her words uttered from the pulpit alike testify how well she is fitted for the office.

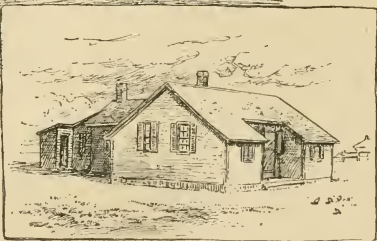
But on The Bank, for near two centuries, there was no edifice dedicated to religious worship. In latter years, with a large summer population, the want of such a structure was felt. A little chapel was built. It was eclectic in its origin. To raise funds for its construction people of all shades of belief chipped in. Orthodox and heterodox; dogmatist and latitudinarian; trinitarian and unitarian; the believer in eternal torments for the wicked, and he for whom sheol and hades have no terrors; the communicant who insisted upon immersion as a means of saving grace, and he who believed that sprinkling is ample; hardshell and pedobaptist; high churchman and low churchman, each contributed of his means, and by another

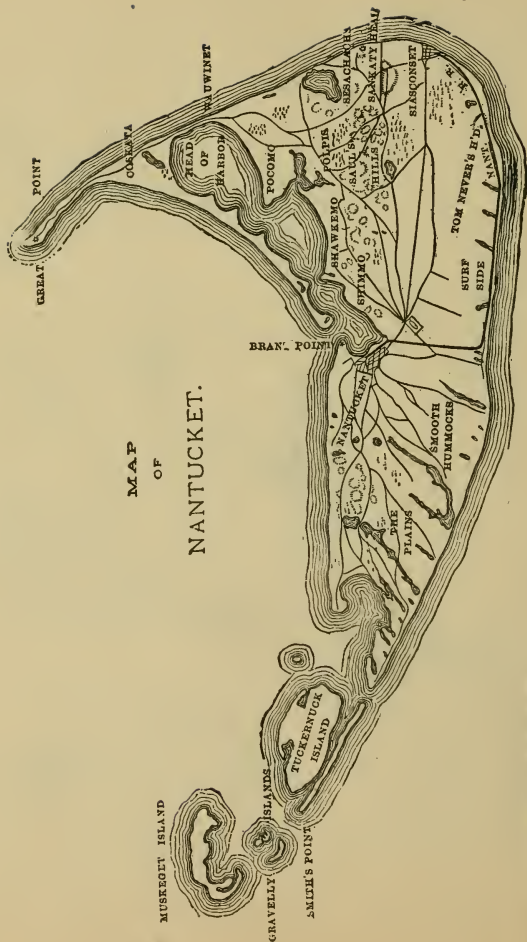
summer the building was completed. During the season, visiting ministers of different denominations address the assembled worshipers representing beliefs as manifold as the hues of Joseph's ulster. But with such an origin, and with such a congregation, strict doctrinal sermons are not heard within the portals of the little chapel. Were they, the teachings of a summer would present a startling mosaic of incongruous theological views. But there is no disposition on the part of teachers to excite religious animosity. The air of the island discourages it. And as the metes and bounds of sectarian domains in the Christian world are perpetually shifting, by reason of one sect, in meek and lowly spirit, poaching upon the preserves of another, until now the lines of demarkation have, in some cases, become confused, if not almost obliterated, it is not probable that theological disputes will ever be heard in 'Seonset chapel loud enough to drown the roar of the breakers upon the beach.

So mote it be.



Ancient  
 House just  
 builded by Master  
 Asa Jones out of  
 new beams and  
 boards and shingles





MAP  
OF  
NANTUCKET.



THE  
CREDIBLE CHRONICLES  
OF  
THE PATCHWORK VILLAGE,  
'SCONSET BY THE SEA.

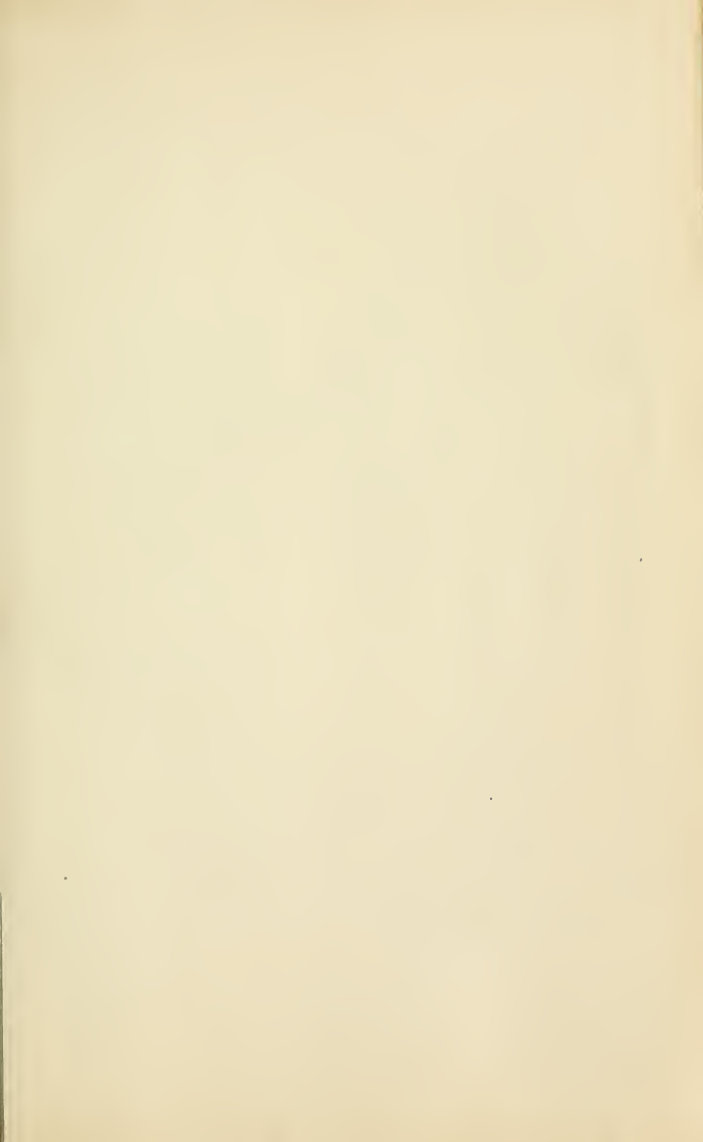


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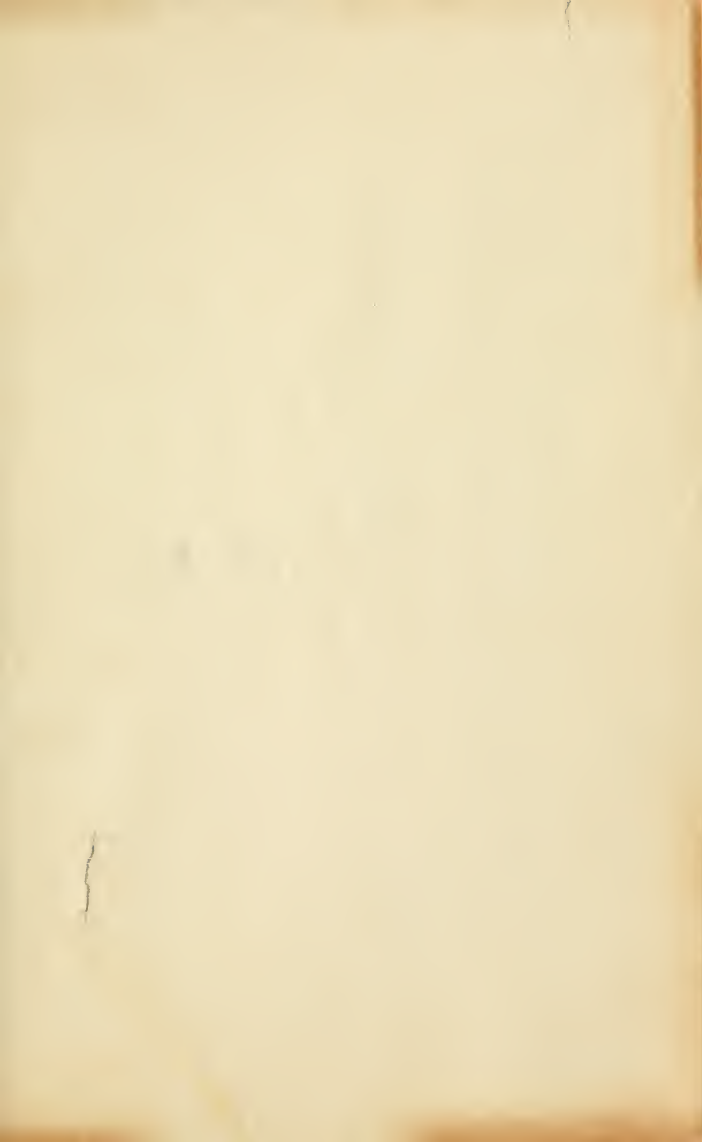








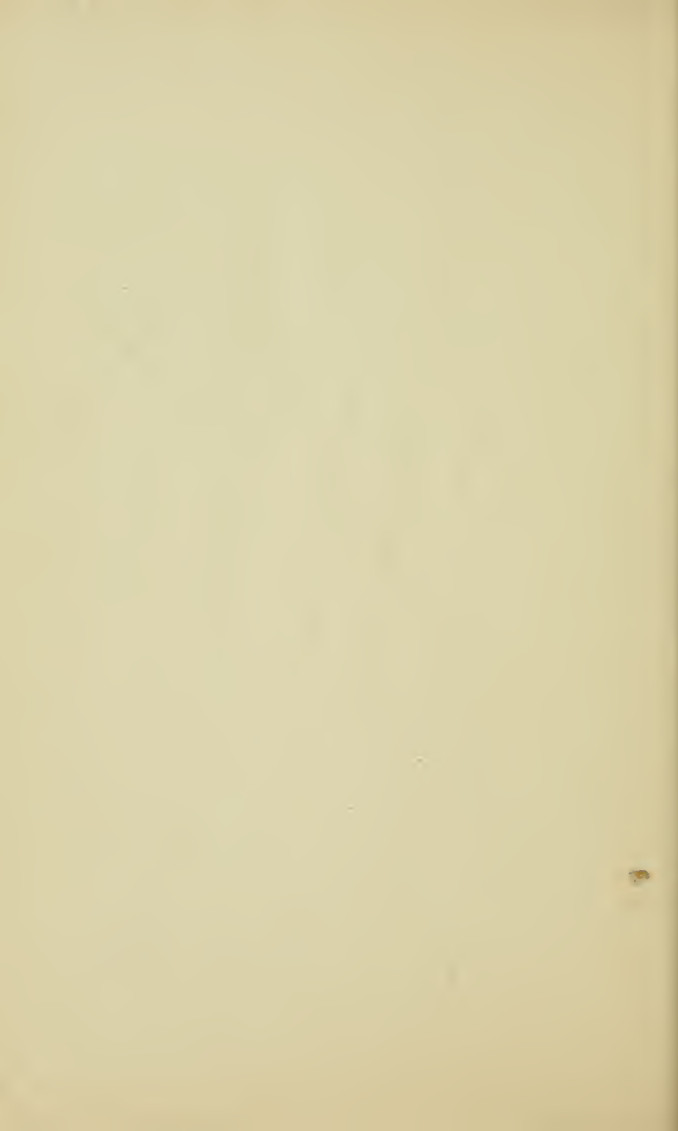








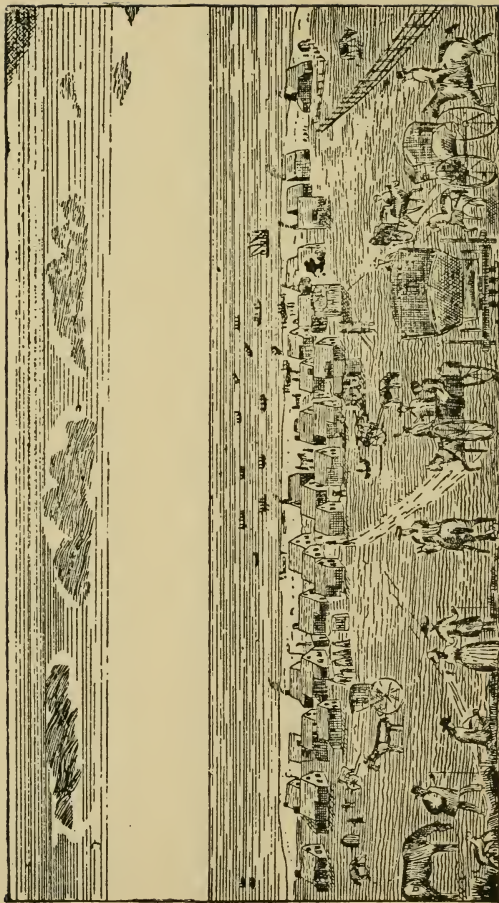




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A View of SIA SCONSET, a Fishing Village on Nantucket.







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